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International Council of Unitarian and other Liberal Religious Thinkers and Workers.
Group of Officers and Foreign Delegates.—London, 31st May, 1901.

LIBERAL RELIGIOUS THOUGHT AT THE BEGINNING OF THE TWENTIETH CENTURY

ADDRESSES AND PAPERS AT THE INTERNATIONAL
COUNCIL OF UNITARIAN AND OTHER LIBERAL
RELIGIOUS THINKERS AND WORKERS, HELD IN
LONDON, MAY, 1901.

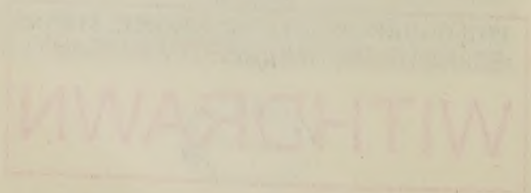
EDITED BY
W. COPELAND BOWIE

London

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PREFACE.

THE contents of this volume owe their origin to a series of meetings held in London at the end of May, 1901, in connection with the International Council of Unitarian and other Liberal Religious Thinkers and Workers. This Council was formed a year before at Boston, U.S.A., by representatives of liberal religious thought belonging to different countries who were attending the Anniversary meetings of the American Unitarian Association.

Unitarians have seldom sought to place any limits on religious fellowship, and the invitation to the meetings in London was in these terms:—

‘All under whose eyes this notice may fall, of any church or of no church, who are willing to come together for the study of the essentials of Religion—things too great for dogmatic expression and too exalted for credal affirmation or denial—all who desire to see the world become better, and who are willing to work together for this betterment, are cordially invited to the meetings of the International Council. In the best possible way the meetings will be fraternal, not sectarian. We will erect no walls of separation not already existing : we will aim to ignore them all, while emphasizing the great commandment of Love to God and Love to Man.’

With few exceptions, the meetings, although largely attended, attracted only those who had

already identified themselves more or less definitely with the Liberal position. Such fellowship will, in fact, remain thus contracted until it is realized that the permanent truths of spiritual religion, which Liberals of all churches affirm, are of infinitely more importance than the historical forms about which men may learn to differ without suspicion or mistrust. The old confessional restrictions will then fall away of themselves. An increasing number in many countries are preparing to adopt this position. When this battle is over, liberal religious thought will take its honoured and acknowledged place in the world, and the support of numbers will not be wanting.

Such a triumph is, however, a long way off. 'Clericalism' is a potent force in the civilized world at the opening of the twentieth century, and 'Liberalism' occupies a small place—a mere speck on the horizon—compared with the organized hosts of 'Orthodoxy.' The justification and the need of an organization of Liberal religious thinkers and workers are self-evident. Freedom of thought can only be attained through conflict; and it can only be enjoyed by unceasing vigilance on the part of those who have reached it by personal effort, or inherited it from the brave and strenuous souls who lived in days gone by. But the small and scattered forces of Liberalism in religion have good reason for encouragement and hope. The addresses and papers in this volume are a striking testimony to the variety, the strength, and the unity of liberal religious thought among many minds in different

lands ; and if all the correspondence had been included, the existence of a large and wide-spread devotion to the principles and ideals set forth by the speakers and writers would have received fuller illustration. It is to be regretted that Mrs. Humphry Ward, much to her own sorrow, was prevented through illness from preparing her paper on 'The Preservation of the Christian Ideal amid Changing Forms of Thought,' for she, on more than one occasion, has borne eloquent testimony to the power of religion over the life of men who unhesitatingly welcome the full light of modern science and criticism.

The report of the Rev. C. W. Wendt , and the record of the proceedings, printed at the end of the volume, relate the brief history of the Council, its principles, work, and ideals. The meetings in London were attended by representatives of liberal religion from many lands, and delegates in large numbers were present from those Free Churches in Great Britain and Ireland, usually called Unitarian. About two thousand people listened to Mr. Stopford Brooke at St. James's Hall, and Essex Hall was crowded during the reading of the papers. The spirit of earnestness, harmony, and enthusiasm displayed throughout the week was a characteristic feature. The addresses and papers, amid considerable variety in the presentation of thought, showed a wonderful unity of feeling and aspiration.

The Committee charged with making the arrangements are greatly indebted to many generous

givers and workers, who made it possible to carry out so successfully the programme of proceedings. They specially desire to place on record their appreciation of the ready and valuable response given by the writers of the papers contributed to the meetings of the Council. These papers form an interesting and instructive survey of the condition and prospects of liberal religious thought at the beginning of the twentieth century. The translation of some of the papers by foreign writers was very kindly undertaken by the Revs. J. Estlin Carpenter, A. E. O'Connor, E. L. H. Thomas, and Mr. Charles Weiss. Papers descriptive of the Liberal movement in India and Japan did not reach England in time to be included in the proceedings of the Council.

A reduced copy of a group of Officers, Foreign Delegates, and others, taken by Messrs. Elliott & Fry, and a few portraits of speakers, whom it was not possible to include in the photographic group, are added as illustrations. They will help to keep fresh the memory of personal friendships which were formed during the meetings.

It only remains to add that the next meeting of the Council will be held in September, 1903, in Holland or Switzerland. Meanwhile, communications may be addressed to the Secretary, the Rev. C. W. Wendt , 25, Beacon Street, Boston, Mass., U.S.A., or to the Rev. W. Copeland Bowie, Essex Hall, Essex Street, Strand, London.

W. C. B.

London, *September*, 1901.

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THE object of the International Council of Unitarian and other Liberal Religious Thinkers and Workers is 'to open communications with those who, in all lands, are striving to unite pure religion and perfect liberty.'—*Statement of Purpose.*

INTERNATIONAL COUNCIL OF UNITARIAN AND OTHER LIBERAL RELIGIOUS THINKERS AND WORKERS.

THE PRESIDENT'S ADDRESS.

BY THE REV. J. ESTLIN CARPENTER, M.A., OXFORD.

BRETHREN of the Liberal Faith, the 'International Council of Unitarian and other Liberal Thinkers,' which holds its first meeting to-day, was called into being a year ago at Boston, Massachusetts. My first duty is to express to its founders my gratitude for the high honour conferred upon me by appointment to this presidential chair; my next, to offer the sincerest welcome of English friends to the many distinguished representatives who have gathered from East and West, from North and South, to give us the benefit of their counsel, and to strengthen us by their sympathy.

We meet in the infancy of a new century, whose untrodden ways lie open before us, asking ourselves towards what goal we shape our course, and taking account of the difficulties and helps that may await us on the road. The movement of the last generations has carried to further issues the work which was but half effected by the Reformation four

hundred years ago, and has disengaged into clear contrast the opposing principles sometimes designated as Authority and Reason, or picturesquely embodied as the Church and the Revolution. The most cursory observation at once reveals the variety of influences which have contributed to this end. Science has ranged freely through the universe, declaring its right to challenge every faith in the name of fact, and demanding (I do not stop to inquire how far justly) that all beliefs shall submit themselves to proof. Philosophy has sought to penetrate into the inmost recesses of human thought, and by interpreting man to himself has striven to fix his relation also to the world around him, and to God in whom he lives and moves and has his being. The study of history pursued by the same method of ordered inquiry has disentangled the rise and growth of doctrines, tested the claims of sacred institutions, and pushed its way back through great ecclesiastical creations to the birth-hour of churches, and the cradle not only of sects but of religions. Moreover, with constantly widening range, it has travelled round the globe ; it has dug up the buried monuments of vanished millenniums ; it has deciphered the hymns and prayers of civilisations already hoary with antiquity ere the garden was planted in Eden and the first man was moulded from the clod ; it has brought into the light of common day yet older secrets of ethnic affinity and religious faith enshrined in language ; and it has shown that the treasure of Christendom, a sacred

book, is no exclusive possession after all, as the vast collections of the East, embracing law, morals, philosophy, and religion, have slowly been unfolded to our view.

The total effect of discovery along so many different lines must needs take long to realize, and to work out their results will be the abiding task of human thought. But it lies at the foundation of the Liberal Faith to admit that these inquiries are all legitimate, to contemplate their advance without fear, and to insist that they shall have the freest opportunity and an unembarrassed way. The process which I have briefly signalised is not confined to any one people, it is not limited to any one church, it is broader even than any one religion. So far, however, its influence has been most conspicuously seen in Christianity, for this has spread itself all round the globe, has commanded the allegiance of the most progressive races, and is the most powerfully organized alike for social and national aims as well as for missionary endeavour. And within its compass is to be found almost every shade of thought and feeling from repressive distrust (such as would exile a Tolstoy) and unquiet apprehension on the one side to unconditional welcome on the other, as the believer confronts its multitudinous phases, and trembles at their bewildering variety, or exults at the courage of the human spirit which dares to assert such audacious claims and attempt such strenuous tasks.

But the position of the devout truth-seeker is

complicated again and again by conditions which limit his freedom and circumscribe his possibilities of action. The great historic churches of Christendom early found it necessary to protect themselves by various safeguards from deviations which threatened to break up their existence altogether. They have adopted creeds, they have prescribed confessions, they have devised methods of government and forms of worship. They have secured coherence, they have achieved continuity, they have made ritual stately and administration firm ; but (to speak broadly) they have shut the door on truth. They offer a rest to the weary, a shelter to the storm-tossed ; they possess vast resources—often most nobly used—for the promotion of their own ritual or historic types ; and if they have passed through seasons of apathy or somnolence, they have shared in the great quickening of our age ; they have called forth an enthusiastic devotion and enlisted a triumphal army of workers, as ignorance and want and suffering and wrong have made to them perpetual appeal. By their constitution, however, they can only with difficulty accommodate themselves to progressive change. Some, indeed, present their confessions avowedly only as historic documents, memorials of a venerable past. In other cases a happy accident may have saved them from prohibiting the movement of a later day, as the Anglican Church finds its formularies fortunately silent on the historical origin and authenticity of its Scriptures. Yet the liberty that is thus

secured is, after all, but partial. It may be well to curb a too rampant individualism within the bounds of an elaborate church-order; it may be well even for a nation to express through the organization of centuries its collective adhesion to the forms and offices of religion; it may be well to preserve the ancient pieties and carry them in the name of the State to every city and village in the land. But this can only be done at a great price. In the last resort when the limits of compromise have been reached, and the possibilities of divergent interpretation exhausted, it may involve the sacrifice of freedom and truth. And whatever be the gain in other directions, there is an increasing number among every Christian people for whom that price is more than dear, it is impossible.

Must those, then, who find themselves compelled by the need of veracity in worship to stand outside, or those who—accepting the same general presuppositions—are yet able to remain undisturbed within their national communions, abide unfriended and alone? Must they be content with their isolation, and cherish in solitude or in small and scattered groups the convictions which have cost so much? Better so, indeed, than palter with their integrity, or be unfaithful to the light that is in them. That position may have been inevitable in the past; it is happily not necessary now. Among the achievements which make the nineteenth century memorable are those material aids for travel and

exchange of thought which have knit the whole earth into a unity undreamed before. It becomes possible, therefore, to gather occasionally for friendly colloquy, for the survey of mutual difficulties, progress, and resource, for the institution of those personal relations which quicken sympathy and sustain lonely effort. Out of such a desire has sprung the Council which meets here to-day. It is first of all a Council of Unitarians, for it owes its inception to them and finds most of its friends within their ranks. But it is in truth of no denomination. It opens its meetings to all who share the Liberal Faith the wide world over, in whatever communion, by whatever name. It offers to them a temporary meeting-place, the opportunity of refreshment and conference in their common cause, the recognition due from sincere workers to sincere workers for the great aims of truth, of liberty, and of religion.

For the field is large and the labour stern. Around us are the struggles of empires and the clash of rival interests, and the huge forces of the world against whose deadening materialism all churches are bound to give untiring battle. Our special share in this great conflict is the promotion of religious truth. To this high goal, indeed, the access has not been made easy, yet the difficulty of the task is the measure of the Father's purpose for us, of His confidence in us, as He calls on us to take our part in the mighty process long ago conceived as the education of humanity into the light,

the love, the freedom, of children of God. And the Liberal Faith, if I rightly interpret it, has realized anew the fundamental truth of all religion that 'God is spirit.' Again and again in the long development of the past has this truth been proclaimed; and again and again even those who saw it most clearly failed to hold it fast, and suffered some lower condition to obscure or distort it. Ancient Israel, soaring to the topmost height of prophecy and psalm, sounded the call to worship for all nations. But the worship was centralised at Jerusalem, and no single house of prayer, even though it were at the mid-point of the earth, could satisfy the universal need. The author of the Fourth Gospel makes, by the mouth of Jesus, the imperishable declaration that the only true worship is in spirit and in truth; it has no local base; it is an act of mind, and knits the soul and God into immediate relations, to which place is indifferent. Yet even he concentrates the 'light that lighteth every man' into a single person, and in his name asserts that 'no man cometh unto the Father but by me.' I will not now ask whether this is intended as the utterance of the ideal and all-pervading Word or the actual Jesus. The contrast must suffice to point my argument that no single historic religion can in reality become universal. In other words, the Liberal Faith of the future will be no longer dependent on a book, even though that book be the New Testament; still less on a priesthood, whatever force a temporary revival of sacerdotalism may here or there display.

The survey of the progress of religions shows clearly enough what part these agencies may play in specific stages of their development. It is a stage which lasts long, and plants deep in the heart of entire races an almost immovable intensity of faith, for it gathers up their holiest experience, and enshrines their most precious hope. Yet the religious condition of Europe, to say nothing of the spiritual lethargy of the East, is a sufficient warning against the dangers of sacerdotal ascendancy. We have seen it in our own day range itself on the basis of Vatican decrees as the uncompromising foe of independence of thought, the untiring opponent of human activity beyond the narrow limits which it chooses to prescribe. We have seen it intriguing in politics, hand in hand with falsehood, the brutal instigator of race-hatred, in the selfish pursuit of its own ends. Not all the glories of its past, not the long roll of its martyrs and its saints, not the triumphs of its art, not the fervour and often the purity of its devotion, not the variety of its services to human need, can blind us to the fact that the great Church of Rome, though it send out its priests to every country of the globe, still bears within it a prophecy of doom, as the human spirit claims the freedom which is its inalienable right. But the strife with an organization so vast, so closely knit, so full of resource, so varied in its power to minister to many of man's deepest yearnings, is full of pain. Those of us who have been nourished in liberties won centuries ago, can hardly realize the strain

which it imposes on solitary combatants, the difficulty and the weariness of the fight. To all such brave champions, and some of them are among us to-day, from Central and Southern Europe, we offer our respectful sympathy ; and we beg of them to accept the support of our conviction that the first principle of the Liberal Faith is the right of the soul to an open way to God ; no church can limit it to chartered channels ; always and everywhere God's grace is freely given ; always and everywhere the Father's welcome is ready for the children who seek Him in trust, humility, and love. This is the truth which we have learnt from Jesus. This is the Gospel we have to carry through the world.

The claims of the religion of the spirit, however, do not encounter their only obstacles in the priest-hoods of the great Catholic Churches, whether Greek, Roman, or Anglican. The doctrine of the infallibility of the Bible has been tacitly abandoned by almost all responsible theologians ; yet there are many signs—such as the struggle for the control of education in this country, the pressure exerted on teachers, the language of popular hymns, it must even be added the occasional silence and evasion of Biblical commentators—that doctrines once based on the literal truth of the Bible still cast a baleful shadow over the thought and life of the masses, and expose those who have abandoned them to social mistrust, amounting sometimes almost to persecution. Confident in the progress of truth, assured of the abiding roots of religion within the

mind, the conscience, the heart, we have sometimes smiled at the petty acts of ungenerous superstition. But there are those who carry the flag of freedom almost alone; they are confronted by influences which are the more difficult to combat because they sometimes decline definite issues and refuse honest intellectual trial. Immense as have been the modifications of the old orthodoxy, those who are best acquainted with the average thought of Protestant Christianity warn us how much of the old leaven of dogmatism and exclusiveness still remains; and isolated sentinels at distant outposts bid us remember that the field is yet by no means won. Even among the most cultivated affection still invests the founder of Christianity with an ideal significance which the record, it is admitted, does not justify; and claims for his religion some kind of final or 'absolute' character. Yet the modern study of the New Testament has shown us how mingled are its universal elements with the accidents of time and country, of local circumstance and frustrated expectation. To understand it aright requires, as we know, an education of the historic and religious imagination, which is indeed one of the noblest exercises of the human mind, but which cannot be everywhere demanded or pursued. And for this reason alone it does not seem likely that any single or specific faith can ever absorb all others into one world-wide Church. We are learning slowly how closely dependent is any one generation on those which preceded it, and we cannot divest

ourselves of our inheritance. No nation can transfer to another its own past. Contact and sympathy may slowly modify the old instincts or gradually create new social ideals. But the days of religious conquest by authority have gone by. The 'people of the book,' as Islam calls the Christians, will use it no longer as having dominion over their faith, but as the Apostle Paul wished to be to his converts, the helper of their joy.

And yet the aspiration after unity will not be repressed. In divers ways it is already at work, drawing together churches that were once divided, creating larger groups with broader liberties, breaking down barriers of suspicion or reserve by the discovery of common sympathies and the hope of common ends. In such tentative movements let us heartily rejoice, even though they are not yet strong enough to include us all. Beyond their scope, however, lies a great spiritual ideal still wider and more comprehensive. The Christian finds in it what he believes to have been the fundamental conceptions of his Master, disentangled from their temporary envelopments, and translated into the larger knowledge of our time. The clearer perception of this ideal, the endeavour to realize it, the strength and support for action derived from it, are, indeed, among the most hopeful features of our age. The passionate conviction that it pervades the universe and links all history into one mighty whole, has received fresh support along many lines of thought, and is the deepest note of poetry, of philosophy, and science.

To disengage its great underlying ideas, to give noble form to the emotions it excites, to bring them into relation with the loftiest historic ideals, and make them potent in the conduct of life,—this must be the task of the preachers of the Liberal Faith. For three mighty objects are always before us—the world, man, and God. The ordered interpretation of Nature is, indeed, the most significant triumph of an age that has perhaps added more to the content of human knowledge than all the preceding efforts of the race. In different forms, the eager pursuers found themselves challenged by theology, till they in their turn took the offensive, and were not slow to proclaim in the name of Truth a holy war. But the conflict, though echoes of it are still occasionally heard, is practically over. For the closer analysis of the fundamental conceptions of science has shown that in the last resort they transcend experience as much as do those of religion. The fearless investigator is, after all, a devout believer in the ultimate unity of the physical energies acting through the modes of motion which alone are manifest to sense. He is, moreover, convinced that the further he advances the less and less likely is it that his quest will be put to intellectual confusion, the more and more certain is he that the world will respond to his inquiries, and in some form or other will answer to his thought. Mysteries there may be, passing his understanding ; but mystery is not disorder, and is the home and not the obstacle of faith. The Power which works through the Great Order is intrinsi-

cally one and everlasting ; and the whole universe is woven out of a tissue of relations which human reason slowly unravels, so that external things perpetually justify the processes and action of intelligence. Nay, their final constituents, which science can reckon up, though it cannot display them to sight or touch, are in a sense the creations of our thought. Yet they did not wait for us to appear upon the scene. The thought which they express was there before us ; and so the world wears the aspect of one phase or manifestation of the Infinite Mind, and science thinks the thoughts of God after him. And the Liberal Faith, as I understand it, adopts this position without reserve. It no longer regards science as something to be reconciled ; still less as something to be dreaded or evaded ; it accepts it with whole-hearted loyalty, and insists on applying its canons through the entire field of Nature and History. It plants life firmly and faithfully on the world's steadfastness. In its joy and beauty, it finds the sympathy of the Eternal touching with its own grace all seasonal vicissitude. And even in its suffering and grief, it learns to say, ' Bless the Lord, O my soul ' ; for it is conscious that it can still rely upon the order and welfare of the whole, and in this faith wounded affection finds healing, and is supported in sacrifice even unto death. For harmony with the Everlasting Will alone is peace.

But within the world stands man. It might be thought that after the uncounted millenniums since he first appeared upon this planet, it is somewhat

late in the day to claim that he is only now beginning to understand himself. Yet the last century has for the first time laid the foundations of a true study in opening up the real story of his past. It has shown us how to trace the origins of his physical frame, to note the rude commencements of his thought, to find in primitive usage the germs of the mighty structures of law and government, of the lofty achievements of art, philosophy, and religion. The newly-founded science of Anthropology is, indeed, conceived at present on a somewhat narrow scale; but it will gradually become more and more clear that in man, his history and power, his thoughts and aspirations, his conscience, affections, will, lies the clue to the interpretation of his place in the world, and the ultimate source and seat of all religion. And as such, *nil humani* can be indifferent to us. For this end, however, not all experience is of equal value. From a very early stage in man's progress, faith and morals have stood out in decisive prominence among the forces of his advance, and have lived under some form of close alliance. The investigation of the nature of conscience, and the discovery that from land to land and creed to creed the contents of the moral ideal in its higher developments have shown frequent resemblance, if not positive identity, have undermined the doctrine of man's total depravity. Morality is no longer conceived as dependent on positive commands of Heaven, revealed in supernatural law or by a supernatural person; it is discerned as a part of the social order, because involved

in the constitution of humanity itself. And there the unique character of man's moral judgments has been clearly disengaged as the very centre and essence of his life ; they cannot be reduced into any other terms of quantity or kind ; and that good which he recognizes as having authority over him, as claiming his services and demanding the consecration of his will, is seen to be no other than the reflection in his own soul of the infinite purpose which enspheres all our being. The Liberal Faith, therefore, will be above all things ethical ; it will demand the highest in personal character ; it will palter with no favourite sins ; and the mighty causes of social justice and international right, of popular welfare, temperance, purity, must ever engage its unfaltering support. It is possible, indeed, that our analysis of the moral life may hereafter go deeper than has hitherto seemed possible. Thus far, the chief subject of examination has been the soul, considered as the seat of individual experience. But new vistas of inquiry are now opening out into the structure of society, the ties that link men each to each, the subtle bonds, but dimly recognized in our common life, which unite the human units into communities, and through the family expand into the State. May it not be, that here we shall ultimately find the moral analogue in the experience of the race to that reason which gives man kinship with the world ? And shall we not thus learn that, in some way beyond our power now to apprehend, each separate historic development has its place in the vast whole, where

God's providence perpetually transmutes the lower elements into the higher, and out of primeval struggle brings forth great ideals of righteousness. In the universe there is order, in humanity is life, and that life is something more than the sum of all the individual persons which may at any moment be reckoned by a census embracing the whole globe. It is the sum of all their connexions and successions, which are not self-made, but follow hidden laws ; so that the mighty web of conscious thought and feeling and endeavour rests on a deep underlying unity, the mind of God revealing itself through the generations of our experience, and folding all our separate purposes within the scope of his Almighty will.

The faith which thus reposes on God as the Author and Upholder of the world, the Creator, Sustainer, Guide, Inspirer of man, will draw un-failing guidance from the great historic religions. It will find in them the highest organized expressions, under the forms of race and time and country, of man's enduring relation to the Eternal. It will recognize with undying gratitude its debt to those prophet souls who have flashed light into dark places so that all might see, and given personal shape to the highest spiritual truths. But it will not insist that Christ shall be its centre any more than Plato. Religion can have but one object, the Everlasting God ; one centre on which it rests immovable, the Infinite Spirit in which we live and move and have our being. Let us, indeed, join willing hands with those who may firmly maintain their own communion

with their risen Lord, but can yet recognize that for other souls there are divers ways within the Father's grace. Must it not, however, be said that the function of Christianity conceived internationally among the races of the world is not to conquer and subdue, but to inspire, to infuse its own ideals and impart some of its own life; and in its turn perhaps to realize with quickening sense of brotherhood the unity of mankind, in that 'God hath made of one every nation of men to dwell on all the face of the earth,' and so win new confidence in its central truths? For this great end may this Council do its modest work. All gifts of thought and love, of faithful labour and lowly worship, can be laid upon this altar without fear or reserve. All service for human welfare finds here its consecration and support. Difficulties there are; they exist only to be overcome. Hazards there will be; they call for great ventures of trust. Let us find our sufficiency where prophets and saints have found it before us,—a sufficiency that will not fail us, though we be not worthy to unloose the latchet of their shoes, and can do no more than give a cup of cold water to some thirsting brother on the way. Before us is the boundless future, and the vast processions of our race are already marshalling themselves to take their places, when we are here no more. What preparation shall we have made for them? When creeds decay and churches totter, shall they be left without a faith? Be it ours to open some blind eyes to discern the sanctuary not made with hands to unstop

some deaf ears to the voice of the Spirit heard more and more clearly within the heart of purity and reverence and love. Our stay and strength, our source and goal is God :—

‘ That God, which ever lives and loves,
One God, one law, one element,
And one far-off divine event,
To which the whole creation moves.’

WELCOME TO FOREIGN DELEGATES.

BY THE REV. JAMES HARWOOD, B.A., LONDON.

MR. PRESIDENT,—Through the kindness of my colleagues, I am entrusted with the great honour of introducing the Delegates who have come from other countries to take part in this International Council.

Beginning with our nearest neighbour, France, I need only refer to the portrait behind you (of Dr. Martineau) for an illustration of the immense benefit we have received from that country through the Huguenots. We welcome with great pleasure on this occasion M. Ernest Fontanès, the well-known pastor in Paris; Professor Jean Réville, distinguished son of a distinguished father; and Professor G. Bonet-Maury, one of whose literary offspring ('Early Sources of English Unitarianism,') I may remind you, had for its sponsor Dr. Martineau. One who was introduced by that beloved and venerated leader needs no further words to commend him to your cordial welcome.

Professor Bonet-Maury, replying for MM. Réville and Fontanès and himself, spoke of Eng-

land as for three and a half centuries the refuge of the persecuted Protestants of the Continent, the land where freedom of conscience was most completely to be found, so that the imperial City of London was the best place for the first meeting of that Council. He recognized the common aim of pure religion and perfect liberty in which they were all united.

REV. J. HARWOOD.—Many of us, Sir, in days gone by, when selecting subjects for study or examination, had to answer the question,—French or German? But in this Council we ignore such limiting alternatives. We are all Hegelians in the sense, at least, of aspiring after ‘a higher unity.’ We had hoped to have with us one of the most distinguished living theologians, Professor Pfleiderer, of Berlin, but to his regret and ours, engagements at his university keep him away. He will, however, be represented by a Paper to be read at to-morrow’s Session. I have much pleasure now in presenting Dr. C. Schieler, of Königsberg, in Prussia, a man who has fought his own way into religious freedom.

Dr. Schieler spoke of the conditions of liberal religious thought in Germany, and said that it must not be supposed that because he was the only representative from Germany their liberal thinkers were few in number. Very many theologians were entirely with them in thought, and had the warmest good wishes for the Council, but did

not dare to confess it publicly for fear of trouble at home. But when the invitation came to his Free Congregation at Königsberg, they felt at once that they must be represented at the meeting, since their avowed position was identical with that of the Council.

REV. J. HARWOOD.—The Rev. James Hocart, of Brussels, is too well known at our Anniversary meetings to require any special introduction. I need only assure him, on your behalf, of our continued esteem for the faithful zeal with which he holds a post of great difficulty and isolation.

Mr. Hocart acknowledged the hearty greeting which he had received. He had always gained strength and inspiration from his visits to London, where his Unitarian friends had given him of their sympathy and support which had cheered him in his loneliness. The International Council would, he believed, prove of great assistance to the cause of a liberal and progressive faith on the Continent.

REV. J. HARWOOD.—There is no country that is more intimately associated than Holland with what may be called the re-birth of the Old Testament during the last generation. We are fortunate in having with us Professor B. D. Eerdmans, who occupies in the University of Leyden the chair which Dr. Kuenen made illustrious; he and the Rev. P. H. Hugenholtz, of Amsterdam, represent the *Protestantenbond*; the Rev. F. C. Fleischer, of

Broek-op-Langendijk, represents the liberal Menonites of Holland.

Rev. P. H. Hugenholtz replied. He brought, he said, the best wishes of fellow-workers in Holland, and especially the greetings of the *Protestantenbond*. He spoke of Holland as the cradle of liberty of religion and conscience, which had been the refuge of many heretics from other countries. The *Protestantenbond*, like the kindred *Protestantenverein* of Germany, aimed at promoting the free growth of religious life both within and without the Church. With its nine thousand members the Association was a power in the country which orthodox bodies could no longer ignore. Both that Society and his own Free Religious Congregation set the highest value on free and practical piety, and offered the best wishes to the International Council.

REV. J. HARWOOD.—To Denmark England is indebted for one of the most popular Princesses known in her history. There is therefore a singular appropriateness in our receiving from that country the only lady delegates who have been accredited to this Council. For their own sake, for the sake of their sex, and for the sake of the young movement which they represent, I commend to your hearty welcome Miss M. B. Westenholz, of Copenhagen, and Mrs. Sass, of Jutland.

Miss Westenholz said she represented their youngest brother, the little Danish Unitarian Con-

gregation which had only recently accomplished the first year of its existence, and she remembered that the little children should be seen and not heard. The longing for sympathy had tempted her to tell the history of their little community to the Council, but she refrained, and only offered the loving greetings of their little congregation, and thanks for the sympathy and help they had received. She asked that they might be received to march on with the greater body, to a higher knowledge of truth and a purer, stronger faith.

REV. J. HARWOOD.—Sometimes, Sir, we are told that the movement, which we represent, is of small importance—a mere local or provincial affair. But as I look on this platform I cannot help recalling Bishop Heber's well-known missionary hymn—

‘From Greenland's icy mountains,
From India's coral strand.’

As the invitation to the Council passed from one extreme to the other, from how many countries did it elicit a response! To Dr. Jan Stefansson, of Iceland, I beg to extend a most cordial greeting.

Dr. Stefansson said that he brought greetings from the poet Matthias Jochumsson, who would most gladly have been present had it been possible, and sent a message of sympathy and brotherly regard. In Iceland he thought there was great scope for the spread of Unitarian thought.

REV. J. HARWOOD.—From Russia there comes Mr. Vladimir Tchertkoff, a friend of Tolstoy. The hearts of those who live in this 'land of the free' go forth with especial sympathy to such brave witnesses for human emancipation and spiritual progress.

Mr. Tchertkoff said that it was a happiness to him to find that his friend's teaching met with such warm response in this country. He himself, and Tolstoy also, belonged to no religious community, but they were in close sympathy with Unitarian teaching. He himself had found it very helpful, and he believed it would be of great service in Russia. He was therefore taking steps to translate some Unitarian literature into his own language.

REV. J. HARWOOD.—In connection with the next delegate whom I have the honour to introduce there is an element of positive dramatic interest. Professor E. Montet is the Dean of the Faculty of Theology in the University of Geneva. That a man holding such a distinguished position in the city of John Calvin should be taking part in a conference called under such auspices as the present, is only one more proof that the world has not been standing still for the last three hundred years. I suppose most of us at times find comfort and strength in the thought that those who once walked this earth are not without sympathy in its affairs, and that in some mysterious way beyond our power to explain they

may perhaps be cognizant of what now goes on here. If this be so, may it not be that as he looks down from the spirit realm on our proceedings, Servetus says: 'Yes, it is indeed true; the blood of the martyrs is the seed of the Church'?

Dr. Montet acknowledged the warm reception he had received as representing the liberal Protestant churches of Switzerland, and expressed his gratitude for the helpfulness of their magnificent and cordial gathering, and the service the Council would render in deepening the spiritual communion which drew them together.

REV. J. HARWOOD.—Who that has been to Italy does not cherish the memory of his visit with fondest delight? Who that has not been there does not look forward with happiest anticipations to going? It is true that hitherto the Liberal Movement in Religion has not progressed in Italy as much as in many other countries. Yet Italy was the home of the Renaissance: it has produced prophets like Dante and Mazzini—to mention only two of her great sons—who standing apart both in their periods and their type of influence are alike in this: that they quicken with still growing power the spirit of our time. We cannot doubt, therefore, that this land of great memories will still claim its share in the great cause which brings us here to-day. We have the pleasure of welcoming the Rev. Tony Andre, of Florence, and an old friend, Signor F.

Bracciforti, of Milan—the English form of whose name—Armstrong—is not entirely unfamiliar to our gatherings here.

Signor Bracciforti, in a fervent speech, declared his faith in the progress and unity of his country, grounded on his faith in God.

REV. J. HARWOOD.—Hungary is a land consecrated by many sacred memories. The representative whom she has sent, the Rev. Nicholas Jozan, of Budapest, finds himself in the midst of many warm friends. In presenting him I may read a message which has just reached me:—‘Greeting from Torda, May 27th, 1901. Here, first in the world in 1557 has been the freedom of conscience proclaimed. And here was Unitarian Religion (1568) legally recognized, where in 1868 the late John James Tayler was present at our Tercentenary. With fraternal love (signed) J. KOVACS.’

Mr. Jozan said that he came from the same town around which the memories of his childhood and the hopes and struggles of his manhood were gathered. He delivered the warm greetings of their Right Rev. Bishop Ferencz, of Transylvania, of his own church at Budapest, and of their other churches in Hungary. In their hopes and aspirations they were at one with the Council.

REV. J. HARWOOD.—And now we come to India, that land of untold fascination and baffling problems. We had hoped to greet Dr. J. C. Bose,

of Calcutta, the eminent scientific investigator and professor, who has been sent over to England by the Government of India to pursue some original research of great importance. But, unfortunately, on account of his health, Dr. Bose has had to leave England for a short time, and his place, therefore, will be taken by Mr. B. C. Ghosh. All who have had occasion to study the Liberal Religious Movement in India, who have seen how much has been accomplished since Ram-mohun Roy, and at a later time, Keshub Chunder Sen proclaimed the Gospel of Spiritual Theism, and who have realized that far greater work still remains to be done,—all such must desire beyond everything else, that every element of strength and devotion may be concentrated on those fundamental matters, with regard to which all sections of the Brahmo Somaj are united.

Mr. Ghosh, in responding, spoke of Mr. Mozoomdar as his godfather, and referred to the teaching of the Brahmo Somaj and the 'New Dispensation' of Keshub Chunder Sen as foreshadowing the ideal of that Council.

REV. J. HARWOOD.—Mr. W. S. Woodhead, of Capetown, and Mr. J. M. Alexander, of Melbourne, are also accredited as delegates to the Council, but as they are not yet present our welcome cannot be tendered in person. Mr. Toyosaki, of Tokio, is on his way to England, but could not arrive in time for the meetings.

That, Mr. President, completes the list of *Foreign Delegates*. There is no 'Message from Mars,' but we have any number of well-wishers from the regions of Pax. There is still, however, one corner of the world which has sent representatives, though I cannot bring myself to speak of them, in any sense, as foreigners. Our American brethren use the same speech, and are sprung from the same stock as ourselves. Their Unitarian Association and ours were born within a day of each other seventy-six years ago. They have had to pass through similar difficulties, and to-day each is able to say that it was never doing more or better work, that it was never stronger in the confidence of its supporters. We welcome with much joy the Rev. C. W. Wendt , of Boston, the indefatigable honorary secretary of this International Council, and the Rev. Dr. S. M. Crothers, of Cambridge, who carries grace and brightness wherever he goes.

Dr. Crothers responded to the welcome. He was charged, he said, to deliver the brotherly greetings of the President and Directors of the American Unitarian Association, and of the Unitarian Churches of the United States. He hailed with delight the union of hearts in touch with each other, and engaged in the noble work of spreading religious truth and freedom all the world over. He congratulated the British and Foreign Unitarian Association on the largeness of mind displayed in calling together such a noteworthy gathering of representatives from so many churches and lands.

THE SYMPATHY OF RELIGIONS.

BY THE REV. S. M. CROTHERS, D.D., CAMBRIDGE, U.S.A.

ONE of the old Roman deities to whom many altars and temples were erected was the god Terminus—the god of boundaries; and it was characteristic of the old thought of the way in which the boundaries between nations and between individuals were established that the god Terminus was pictured as a deity without arms and without feet. There he stood immovable, representing something that could never change. That is the ancient idea of the distinction between races and persons and religions. That is the idea which we have in the old Hebrew Psalms, of the way in which God gave the sea its decree, and said :—‘ Thus far shalt thou go and no further.’ The ancient idea was of a world of fixed divisions—a finished world for good or for evil.

The world that opens up to the modern man is altogether different from this—not the world of fixed divisions, not the world where the god Terminus stands immovable, but the world of power. Every atom becomes to the modern mind a centre of force.

Every creature is pushing out in every direction, full of aspiration, full of desires, with impulses of its own. Everywhere these forces are at work—great physical forces building the world and destroying the world ; moral forces, spiritual forces, intellectual forces. In the true sense to-day, we must say, as our fathers said : Force rules the world, has ruled it—shall rule it. The fundamental question is not how beautiful a thing is, how rational an arrangement it is, but how forceful it is. The question which comes to us as we look upon the future of civilization is as to the amount of force which makes for righteousness, which may make for a better civilization.

Has our religion decayed ? Has our civilization dropped back ? Are good men nerveless, or is there a great influx of courage and of faith and aspiration in the world ? That is a question which comes to us, and makes all questions of tradition indifferent to us, and it is from that stand-point that I wish to speak to you. It is not an academic question, but one of personal interest to every one of us. We see everywhere the new power which man has discovered—the mighty force of combination, industrial, social, political, the great new Imperialism. The little things are pushed to the wall ; the great strong things are again asserting themselves. The day of petty thought is past, and now we stand as those who love not merely our own nations, or our own churches, but as those who are interested in the welfare of the world. When we are confronted

by the mighty combinations of selfishness and greed, when we see what designing men can do by using the great forces of the world for their own selfish ends, we ask if there are spiritual forces equally great, nay greater? Away with our pettiness and our littleness! The great word of religion to-day is the word not of Protestantism, it is the word of Catholicity, a world-wide thing, a mighty triumphant thing; and we as Liberals need to give up once for all the idea that we are standing for 'the dissidence of dissent,' and to take our place manfully as leaders in that Catholicism, vaster in its sweep and more practical than that which Hildebrand ever dreamt of. The great word of the ancient creed given to us Liberals, and given to us because we are Liberals, is: 'We believe in the Holy Catholic Church.' We believe in the Church universal, and we work for the Church universal.

Now what does that mean? I was given the title to my address this morning of 'The Sympathy of Religions'; but the phrase may be misleading. 'The Sympathy of Religions!' As if there were one religion over here, and another religion over there, and that they ought to tolerate one another and sympathize with one another. That is not it. The biologist does not talk of different lives as if they had different laws. What he is interested in is the development of life; one life from the beginning, manifesting itself through a thousand forms, and yet under the control of one law. And what we stand for on this platform, men of different

creeds, with different antecedents, is not a mere eclecticism. That is the weakest thing that was ever thought of. Carlyle quotes Novalis, 'Every eclectic is at heart a sceptic.' A man who does not believe in anything finds it easy to tolerate everything. It is like that which sometimes passes for cosmopolitanism. A man travels round the world, a good-natured spectator, without any sense of responsibility. That is not cosmopolitanism. Such a man is not 'a citizen of the world,' he is not a citizen of anything. He is not at home anywhere. A true cosmopolitan is a patriot, with his love of country, with his love for home and kindred enlarged and purified. It is because I love my own country that I love England and Italy and Germany. It is because my heart thrills with the story of liberty in my own country that I know that there is the same emotion which men all round the world have felt. And so it is with religion.

In one of the Platonic dialogues Socrates asks a man a searching question: 'What is virtue?' And the man begins a rambling talk on the subject, and Socrates says: 'I asked you what virtue is, and you tell me "Oh, there are a great many different kinds of virtue."' And so, when I ask a man, 'What is religion?' and he begins to tell me that there are a great many different kinds of religion, I come to the conclusion that he does not know what any religion is. Religion is something that a man is loyal to; ready to die for and live for; the highest force; the holiest thing he knows; his

aspirations after the Infinite and the perfect. Shall we treat religion as a conventional thing ; a temporary thing ; something which is peculiar to one country—or shall we treat it as a great elemental divine power, the power of God in human life ? When we find a person in my country who is a pretty good person, we say that he has a ‘New England conscience.’ We often imagine that we invented conscience, but I find that your conscience is very much the same kind of conscience that ours is. Now we come back to the fundamental idea of religion, and I think the man who has a religious impulse in himself has the key for the interpretation of the whole history of humanity in all generations. There is nothing foreign, nothing strange. It is simply human nature, weak and imperfect, striving upward, under the circumstances of its own age, with the traditions that happen to be around it, toward the ideal perfection, which is the goal of all our endeavour.

Do you ask me whether I understand Buddhism ? I do not understand the thing. I do not understand the circumstances of the people, but I begin by taking for granted that a Buddhist is a human being. Do you say, ‘How strange it is that a person should long for Nirvana—for the cessation of conscious thought !’ Does that seem to be strange to you ? It does not seem to be strange to me, because I have been tired a good many times, and that is the way we all of us feel when we are tired ; when we think of the great injustices in the world ; when we see

millions around us starving, and see the hopelessness of their struggle through life. If a great weariness were upon us, and we were parched with thirst, and one should come to us, proclaiming in the name of the Eternal—rest and peace, ‘Blessed Master,’ every one of us would say, ‘Our Saviour, our Light!’ Only now and then do we of the Western world feel that, but when we do feel thus we have the key to oriental mysticism.

Each one of us has some time been young, and we know the impulses which stir in the youthful heart—strong, hopeful. The world is all before us, and the great words then which we emphasize are the words of freedom, independence. It is then joy enough to live our own life, to be free to cut loose from the past. Then the great words from all the ages, of the great souls, men of eternal youth and strength, come to us. We know then what Luther meant, what Latimer felt, what the great pioneers meant; we know what Paul meant in his joy in a new life. We rejoice in all their words. They may come from a thousand sources, and from many lands; but they touch us. Then we grow older. We are disappointed. We are sick. We see the dreams of youth perhaps fade away. A great home-sickness comes, and we stand afraid of the future, knowing not what it may bring to us. Then the great words of Conservatism come to us. We know then why men build temples to which they may retire; why they set aside in this busy world some sacred place. We know what Thomas à

Kempis meant in 'The Imitation of Christ.' We know what the old stories meant when, in an alien world, in a world against which they individually rebelled, they sought calmness and strength, and like strong men armed, kept their houses, not knowing when a stronger than they might come upon them. There are times when every one of us must know what Pessimism means—the great ideal that seems not for us to be realized—a pure soul in an alien world. You go back to the old Persian poet, and you read again and understand :—

‘ Oh, Love, could you and I with him conspire,
To grasp this sorry scheme of things entire,
Would we not shatter it to bits, and then
Remould it nearer to our hearts’ desire ?’

There are moods when we know what Agnosticism means. There are times when we are utterly crushed down, and then we understand as never before the words of the ancient Psalmist :—‘ All thy waves and billows are gone over us.’ Is there any mood which the human soul has ever felt which does not sometimes thrill the sensitive heart to-day ? Then we realize that amid all these outward differences there is unity—one ceaseless aspiration after the perfect, by men who, themselves, are imperfect ; a struggle for liberty on the part of men who are only half free.

And now I want to speak of what seems to me is to be the practical thing in this sympathy of religions. It is an easy thing and a cheap thing to sympathize with the religion of people we never

meet. I have the greatest ease in sympathizing with a Zoroastrian, or an esoteric Buddhist, but when it comes to some little High Church curate, that is a little harder, because there is a good deal of human nature in all of us. The practical outcome of it all is, that we shall indeed sympathize with that High Church curate, and with the Wesleyan evangelist, and even sympathize with people who have a different kind of Unitarianism from our own. We must come to the point where we are habitually emphasizing the great things and the true things.

I want to emphasize in what I have to say, that that which seems to me to be one of the keys of the situation, is to give up altogether the idea that long ago religion was being made, that the religion that we have to-day is less vital and less imbued with the primitive instincts and hopes of men than that in some far-off age. As you stand at the base of a mountain you see perhaps a cloud hanging on the summit. It seems to you as if the little cloud has drifted across the sky, and is 'shepherded by the slow, unwilling wind.' But as you approach you find that the wind is keen, and you see the hurrying particles of the mist. You ask why does not the wind drive the cloud away. Then you come to see that you are in the great laboratory of the sky, where the clouds are being made. From the lowlands the winds are sweeping up, trying to storm the mountains, forcing up the moisture-laden air. Just as they reach the summit the burden they have

carried becomes visible. The wind is ever driving the particles away, the wind ever forming there the cloud. Now so it is with all the heights of human life. They are always shrouded in mystery. The winds do not dissipate it, they create it. Courage, love, devotion are lifted up to the heights. Behold there the ever-present mystery of godliness! All life is touched at last by something which we cannot understand. The whole life of man, all his civilization, all his knowledge, all his achievements, are borne along by eternal forces, and reach at length to that great mystery wherein the thought of that which is highest in man blends insensibly with religion and with worship.

THE RELIGIOUS CRISIS OF OUR AGE.

BY PROFESSOR OTTO PFLEIDERER, D.D., BERLIN.

IT is an acknowledged fact, that the Christian religion is at present involved in a crisis which appears to be of graver nature, both in scope and in character, than any previous conflict. In scope, because it is no longer confined to the upper classes, but has seized hold of the great masses; and in character, because doubt and contradiction have passed beyond the outworks of hierarchical abuses and patristic or scholastic dogmas, and have attacked the very foundations of religious belief. But, as history teaches that Christianity has already issued from many a struggle not only victorious, but also purified and invigorated, we are justified in the hope that the present crisis will finally enable the religious spirit, set free from ancient bonds, to realize with greater freedom, energy, and purity, its indestructible life. The more impartially we contemplate the present difficulty, the more clearly we endeavour to recognize its causes, the more convinced shall we be that the very circumstances and tendencies of thought which are responsible for the evil, implicitly



Prof. OTTO PFLEIDERER, D.D.

contain the forces of resistance and of cure, which will bring to light, with the aid of the Christian spirit, a new development alike of religion and of the moral life in human society.

The religious crisis of to-day rests on a combination of new scientific modes of thought with new social ideals, such as has never presented itself before. The former are summed up in the idea of Evolution, which became dominant after Darwin in the field of natural science, and was then applied by Marx to history also, with the intention of eliminating from it all ideal aims and motives, and reducing everything to the struggle of material interests. By this means the idea of Evolution, which still in Herder and Hegel served to support an idealistic teleological interpretation of history, was now employed as the foundation of that practical materialism which, in social democratic circles, has taken the place of the religious view of the world. This view is now opposed by a combination of the practically socialist tendency with the scientific modes of thought belonging to our time. In this conflict lies the difficulty of the present situation. How can we meet it? What can we do to preserve religion for our children and grandchildren, and to heal the breach which seems to have been formed with such incurable mischief between the ineradicable religious needs of the human heart and man's modern thought?

Thus much, at any rate, is certain,—that nothing could be more perverse, nothing more futile, than the renewed attempt of short-sighted and narrow-

minded men to suppress the scientific thought of the present day, or, at any rate, wherever it comes into collision with traditional ecclesiastical doctrines, to deny it all justification, and exclude it from popular instruction. Nowadays, when in all civilized countries the school and the press vie with each other in popularizing and diffusing the scientific results of astronomy, geology, biology, anthropology, and sociology, it is impossible to prevent the simple man of the people from comparing these results with the Biblical-ecclesiastical traditions of the creation of the world in six days, or of the primeval paradisaical condition of humanity, and convincing himself that they are no longer tenable. In the answers to an inquiry instituted, some years ago, among the German working classes,¹ concerning their religious convictions, no point was emphasized with such unanimity and decision as this,—that the Biblical story of creation was refuted by science, especially by Darwin. Unhappily, their answers disclosed the further result, that for the majority the disappearance of this simple belief involved the loss of their faith in God and the religion of the Bible generally.

Hasty and foolish as this fatal inference certainly is, it is only too amply excused and explained by the attitude of ecclesiastical teachers, some of whom declare the acceptance of the Biblical story to be a religious duty, as it has been revealed direct from God; thus making short work alike of the historical

¹ Cp, Rade, '*Die Religiös-sittliche Gedankenwelt unserer Industrie-Arbeiter*,' a lecture at the Evangelical-Social Congress in Berlin, 1893.

criticism of the Mosaic books, and of natural science from Copernicus to Darwin. Others cannot go quite so far in their concessions to the credulity of their hearers. They admit that the Biblical creation story is not literally true; it shows the influence of the cosmological ideas of antiquity, which no longer possess binding power over us. But they only go half way. They are willing to surrender the literal six days; but cannot resolve to extend the theory of development as far as the origin of man, and exchange paradise for the stern struggle for existence, or the fall for the victorious ascent of primitive humanity. If once the beginnings of the Biblical history are given up, they fear that the modern idea of Evolution may penetrate still further, and at length destroy the entire structure of the ecclesiastical creed.

In this apprehension, they are in fact not wrong. The church doctrine has been so artificially compiled, in the course of ages, out of the materials of ancient mythology and philosophy, that the fundamental corrections required by modern science threaten the whole with ruin, unless a radical reconstruction be adopted in good time. Half measures, diplomatic concealments, can no longer avail. The assured results of science must be recognized without reserve; ecclesiastical traditions which are in conflict with them must be dropped as dogmatic principles in their literal acceptance, they must be explained as the symbolic investiture of religious ideas; the permanent truth which no scientific results

can impair must be displayed. Traditional doctrines may fall to the ground; but religion, thus disburdened of antiquated forms, will arise in greater purity and more vital energy.

When the Copernican was substituted for the Ptolemaic astronomy, the theologians of the sixteenth century condemned the innovation as a soul-destroying error. The heliocentric theory was fatal to the naïve representation of the intercourse of man with God and exalted spirits. The earth was no more a fixed disc beneath the vault of heaven above, with hell yawning in the deep beneath. What, then, became of the upper dwelling of the blessed souls, and of the place of doom for the condemned? There was no place for the heaven from which Christ came down, the hell into which he descended, or the seat at God's right hand to which he went up through the sky, and from which he should return to judge the earth. The whole traditional scheme of redemption fell to pieces, with the overthrow of the pre-Copernican universe. Yet Kepler and Newton showed that the knowledge of the laws of the universe, so far from being a hindrance to faith, only deepened their reverence for the power and wisdom of the Creator. The master of philosophical criticism, Kant, testified in like manner that there are two things which ever awake our pious awe—the starry heaven above us, and the moral law within. Both were to him the revelations of an Almighty Divine Power, which established and sustained the order alike of the natural and of the moral

worlds. Modern astronomy has thus replaced the primitive conception by something better. In showing that the heavenly bodies move according to law, it has confirmed us in the conviction that 'the heavens declare the glory of God, and the firmament showeth his handiwork.' Of this theme the story of the creation supplies the poetic illustration. In this lies its ideal significance, which no science can set aside.

The same is true of the other stone of stumbling, the Darwinian doctrine of Evolution, when applied to the origin of man. When biology presents man as the final fruit of a long development from a primitive cell, it indisputably satisfies the understanding with its search for causes far better than the childish representation that God had moulded the human frame out of a clod, and blown into it the breath of life. Nothing prevents us from seeing in this representation with many early Church teachers, such as Origen, a mere symbol of the truth that, while man's corporeal life is derived from the earth, his spirit comes from God, and is kin with him. Does this union and relationship with the being of God, felt more or less clearly by mankind at large—we might call it the general and natural consciousness of Divine humanity—really stand in conflict with the scientific doctrine of Evolution? This would only be the case if the development of man's physical nature were conceived solely as a mechanically materialistic process, excluding all ideal and teleological principles. But so one-sided a theory, though it finds favour in many

quarters, is not only not required by science, it even contradicts prudent scientific thought. Investigators who accept the doctrine of Evolution in principle, have admitted that mere causal mechanism does not suffice to explain the rise of life in general, or of mind in particular. A spiritual principle is needed besides, whose purposes are carried out by the causal process as the means. This presupposition does not, indeed, permit of experimental proof, and may be consequently rejected; but science has no right to deny it. To do so, would be an unwarrantable transgression of the limits imposed on the world of phenomena. No science, therefore, can prevent us from regarding the life of the earth as a process in which the chain of causes and effects is only one side of a teleology controlling the whole, such as Kant declared in the most emphatic terms to be indispensable for the knowledge of Nature. But, in that case, its actual issue, the production of spiritual life in man, must be regarded also as its initial aim,—which is only possible on the assumption of a purposive creative reason. Thus understood, the doctrine of Evolution, far from being hostile to religious conviction, serves much rather to confirm it. Man has his origin in the creative mind of God, who has not, indeed, produced him so immediately as in the Biblical story; but has brought him forth as the crown of the rest of creation, by the instrumentality of its entire development. The origin of man is then conceived no more as an abrupt act of miracle; it is regarded as, indeed, based on Divine power and

wisdom, but as accomplished by means of natural causes through a long process of time.

Is this difference significant enough to make it worth while to prolong the quarrel between Theology and Science? What does it matter, whether God created man out of an inorganic clod or out of a primitive cell destined to develop into a thousand forms of life; whether he produced him in a single day or in the millenniums before the human race first appeared on earth? It would be of small consequence, it is replied, if there were no further issues. But the Biblical tradition presents man as created perfect, in the likeness of God, and fallen from this elevation by his own fault; while the theory of Evolution exhibits him as issuing from the lowest animal conditions, and only rising amid prolonged and severe struggle for existence to higher stages of human civilization. The whole course of history is thus reversed. Dogma declared man fallen, guilt-laden, needing atonement; and finally restored only by the fresh miracle of redemption. In his place appears the man of actual history, striving upwards, freeing himself by labour, sacrifices, and suffering of every kind, from the early bonds of a coarse nature, and thus attaining his likeness to God. The former beginning is now the goal. A vanished Eden in the past has become the ideal of Hope, towards which we may for ever aspire. This difference is certainly not to be under-estimated; but who would assert that what we lose by this exchange is worth more than that which we obtain? Who will not rather

thankfully recognize that here science exerts on our moral and religious thought a liberating influence? The whole dogmatic theory of man's inherited guilt, of the curse upon all generations, which even involved the whole animal creation, and turned the earth into a house of correction,—what is this but the expression of a gloomy weariness of life, convinced of the exhaustion of his physical and mental powers, and despairing of the world and of humanity? Modern philosophy long ago sought to break the yoke of the pessimist dogma which Augustine fastened on the Christian world. Herder, Kant, and Hegel, allegorized the Fall, and substituted the theory of Evolution for that of depravity. But their efforts met with hardly any success. As they were philosophers, their teaching was neglected; the theologians would not understand it, and the mass of men could not.

Then came Science, which carried the idea of Evolution to irresistible victory. The Fall became a myth, hereditary guilt a phantom. Instead of a feeble yearning for a lost paradise and a vanished likeness to God, there arose a manly aspiration and a triumphant struggle after a fuller realization of the ideal of humanity in the Divine image. Science thus gave the most potent impulse to the emancipation of the religious consciousness from the fictions of ecclesiastical tradition—an emancipation which far transcends that begun by the Reformation of the sixteenth century. Nor is this, in its truest meaning, in the least degree anti-Christian. It comes much nearer

than the church dogma to the spirit of Jesus. Jesus knew nothing of the curse of the Fall, or of the burden of hereditary guilt. He did not treat the little children as lost or condemned for Adam's sake. On the contrary, he declared that 'theirs is the kingdom of heaven,' and regarded likeness to God not as a lost primeval possession, but as a goal to be achieved by moral endeavour. And so he stands entirely on the side of modern Evolutionism and Optimism.

Another important step has been taken by the religious consciousness with the aid of modern science. It is the axiom of physical science that every event in space and time stands under the absolute sovereignty of the law of causation. The chain of cause and effect, therefore, can never be interrupted by supernatural acts or 'miracles.' From the days of Spinoza and Hume this principle was established by philosophy; but it was first irresistibly demonstrated and carried to its full issue by modern science with the aid of the theory of evolution and the doctrine of the conservation of energy. Against this conclusion the ecclesiastical apologist still protects himself on the ground that the miraculous stories of the Bible are supported by the infallibility of inspiration, or at any rate by the trustworthiness of the evangelic witnesses. But at this point historical science steps in, with its methodical criticism of the documents, and destroys this last prop of the traditional belief. It shows that our existing Gospels were

none of them composed by eye-witnesses of the life of Jesus. They are the work of men of the second and third Christian generation. They derived their materials from different sources, written and oral, whose manifold variations prove that these materials were shaped under the influence of creative imagination and popular legend. To this must be added that the comparative history of religion has laid increasing stress on the surprising resemblance and relationship between biblical and extra-biblical legends. It is thus no longer possible to assign to the former an exceptional position; and there remains only the alternative of treating all the stories as true, or none at all. The first course will be entertained by no one; and the question of miracles, so far as science is concerned, is thus practically solved. The teachers of religion ought to recognize this fact frankly, and be grateful to science for relieving them of the laborious and unfruitful task of defending the historical reality of naïve legends—a task which will seem as strange to future generations as it would seem absurd to-day for an admirer of Homer to feel bound to defend the stories of the gods and heroes as genuine history. Besides their poetic charm, however, the Biblical legends further possess the higher value of symbols, which express in picturesque and generally intelligible form the ideal truths and spiritual experiences of the early Christian community. As the religious teachers of to-day succeed more and more in setting forth

this ideal meaning of the Biblical narratives, less and less importance will be attached to their literal truth. We shall cease to dispute about the supernatural miracles of antiquity ; in the daily course of nature we shall learn to adore the 'wonders' of divine power and wisdom, and in the significant events both of history and of our own lives we shall recognize the signs of a ruling Providence to whose guidance we can commit ourselves in humility and trust. In this field also the seeming loss will finally prove itself real gain. Instead of a few doubtful miracles in a distant past, the pious mind will find the actual world and the life of the present everywhere and always full of marvels, of events without and within us revealing the wisdom, justice, and goodness of God as he rules the world and educates humanity. That was the meaning of Jesus when he condemned the craving for signs among his contemporaries, and urged them rather to understand the signs of the times. In the power of his word over the hearts of men they would find a sign and a call to repentance such as the men of Nineveh had recognized in the preaching of Jonah (*Matt.* xvi. 2—4 ; *Luke* xi. 29). From the magical wonders of the world of sense, Jesus thus pointed his countrymen to the spiritual and moral wonders of the inner life. These collide against no science, for they do not belong to the external sphere with which science is alone concerned. So far as modern science enables the religious consciousness to return into

its own field of the spirit, we ought to reckon the present crisis as a step towards final victory. It will help to eliminate the unspiritual elements of traditional Christianity, and bring into clearer view as its real essence the religion of spirit and of truth.

But now religion appears to be threatened with a new and graver peril from the science of history. The doctrine of development has resulted for many minds in a mechanically materialist interpretation of the course of history, which rejects all ideal forces, all personal spiritual life, all lofty ideas and heroic deeds, as decisive factors of progress, and recognizes as effective causes only the condition of the masses, their physical needs and social endeavours. Not even the history of religion is allowed to constitute any exception. Instead of a revelation of eternal truths by prophets impelled by the divine Spirit, religious movements must be universally regarded as the reflex and effect of the conditions of national culture and economic necessities. This purely naturalist treatment of history is the extreme reaction against the traditional supernaturalism which persisted in seeing in prophets and apostles the inspired bearers of infallible divine oracles, as well as against the aristocratic hero-worship which overlooked, or at any rate underestimated, the dependence of particular historic personalities on their environment and the general circumstances of their age. And cer-

tainly the evolutionary interpretation of history is entirely in the right in giving full weight to the causal law in this field also. It can admit no unmediated event, but must everywhere take cognizance of the connection of the individual with the general, and of the great with the small. It is indisputably true that even the great personalities and the pioneering deeds of history are only links in the chain of the development of the human race under the law of causation; that their appearance and their success everywhere depend on their environment, and on the conditions which have issued from the preceding course of events. This holds good even of the religious heroes. They have not descended direct from heaven, nor are they the bearers of infallible oracles lifted above all temporal experience. They are the children of their race and of their age; they not only share the general culture of the time, they participate especially in the religious traditions, ideas, usages, feelings, hopes; and these in their turn are indissolubly connected with the political and social destinies of specific peoples and periods. No one will deny that the appearance of Jesus Christ was only possible within the Jewish nation where the way had been prepared by the prophets, and that his career could only produce lasting results when 'the time was fulfilled,' when—that is to say—under the terrible pressure of political and social need the hopes and yearnings of the people for the advent of the Messianic

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WITHDRAWN

salvation had reached their utmost intensity. But however important this may be, it would be an error to conclude that the misery of the Jews of that age afforded a sufficient explanation for the person of Jesus, and for the origin of Christianity. That misery was shared by all, and all called for deliverance, but only one was able to bring it and become a saviour, Jesus of Nazareth. Do we ask why? The answer in the age of evolution cannot differ essentially from that already given by the evangelists, Jesus was the redeemer because he was chosen by God and anointed with spirit and power. Whether in religious or secular history, it is only the inborn genius, this mysterious divine power in a man, whose ultimate source lies in the Father of spirits, which can solve the problems of its time and achieve the salvation of all. The mass never contains the productive power for this, only the demand for it, and the susceptibility to it. Outward circumstances may awaken the slumbering energy of the individual genius, and prepare the proper paths for its action; but they can no more generate its force than the cylinder of the steam-engine can beget the driving power of the steam. Of the significance of this peculiar force of personality all ages have shown an instinctive consciousness. Hero-worship, which admires in the hero a gift of Deity and joyously obeys his authority, lies deep in human nature, and even in our democratic age constantly breaks through all paralogsms of the understanding with

elemental might. The higher any personality stands in moral worth, and the wider the range of its activity, the stronger is its attractive power on the hearts of men, so that they are bound to it in reverence and admiration, in confidence and love.

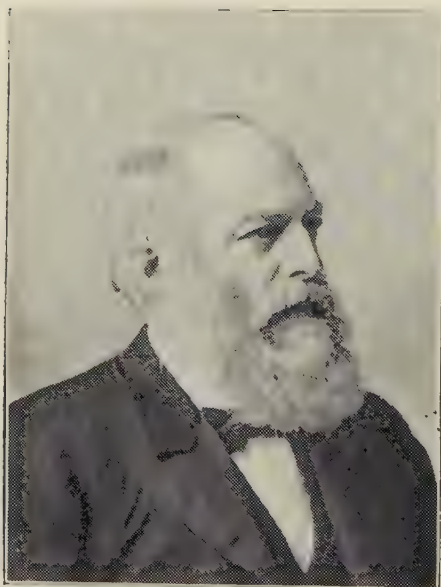
This experience in which a law of nature is revealed—not in the sphere of sense but of man's moral nature, no careful science should ignore. Should it seek to do so, it would soon be convinced of its error by life itself. We have no fear, therefore, of the victory of the materialist interpretation of history. It may justly emphasize the causal connections and conditions of all historical events, but it will never succeed in erasing from the history of humanity its ideas and ideals, its personalities and heroes, and transforming everything into a waste and purposeless struggle of the masses for material existence. Not only does the scientific understanding protest against such one-sidedness; the instinct of the nations refuses to be talked out of its reverence for leading personalities, and the heart of humanity will not allow itself to be robbed of its noblest possession, its pious gratitude towards the exalted heroes in whom we may contemplate the human revelation of the divine truth and goodness. This is above all true of the person of Jesus Christ, according to the testimony not only of the faithful Christians of all ages, but also of many of those among our contemporaries who otherwise

boast of their emancipation from Church and Christianity. Among the working classes (as described by Rade) one of the most noteworthy features is the sympathy and reverence shown even by radicals for the person of Jesus. Little as they wish to know of the Christ of dogma, their interest is vital in the Jesus of history ; and if they see in him pre-eminently the friend of the poor and the powerful opponent of the ruling classes, this conception, which is intelligible from their point of view, may be called perhaps one-sided, but certainly not unfair ; nay, it must be admitted that it realizes an important aspect of the Gospel figure too little regarded by ecclesiastical theology. And this correction leads to the important inference that Christianity is not rightly apprehended in the meaning of its founder when its message of salvation is referred only to the blessedness of heaven hereafter, or even to a mystical redemption and tranquillity of soul in this life for the individual, while its obvious intention to renew and transform the social life of the world is overlooked or placed in the background. It is the most certain result of the criticism of the Gospels that the early Church, and, still earlier, Jesus himself, hoped for the appearance of the kingdom of God upon earth. This oldest form of Christian faith was afterwards rejected by theology under the name of Chiliasm as Jewish error. To hold fast the essence of its social ethics, while divesting it of its apocalyptic supernaturalism, and to take

in hand its realization by persistent work in church and society,—this is the task of the present to which historical science and practical life both point the way. To this ethicising of Christianity will correspond the Christianising of ethics and politics. If the Socialists revere in Jesus first and foremost only the friend of the people, further penetration into the Gospel story will soon convince them that his saving love for the poor, the sick, and the sinner, was far removed from moral indifference. A holy earnestness and zeal against sin glowed through it. As the condition of entrance into the blessedness of the kingdom of God he demanded the moral renewal of the character, struggle against sensual desires, hunger after righteousness, the doing of the will of the Father in heaven. He did not believe that the salvation of a people was founded on external circumstances; he knew that most of all depended on the hearts of men; and so he began his saving work with the summons to repentance and the moral and religious education of individuals by his word and example. Should not that be an inspiring example for the friends of the people to-day? Even the politicians might learn of Jesus that the kingdom of God does not, like the kingdoms of this world, rest upon force and selfish lust of power; and its advent is not promoted by bloody wars in the name of the Cross, or even of humanity and civilization, by the devastation of countries, and the crushing of nations. When the disciples of Jesus in their

typical missionary zeal wished to call down fire from heaven upon a hostile village, the Lord asked them, 'Know ye not of what spirit ye are ?' (*Luke* ix. 55). And when on another occasion they disputed about precedence in the kingdom of heaven, he said to them, 'Whosoever would be great among you shall be your minister, and whosoever would be first among you shall be servant of all' (*Mark* x. 43—4). That is a maxim from which the reality of political life will long be far removed. But it assuredly contains the ideal to which we must for ever approach, if we are in earnest about the coming of the kingdom of God upon earth.

The signs of the times, therefore, and the present religious crisis, thus point to one result. Christianity must be relieved of its traditional dogmatic bonds, so as to enable its ethical leavening power to advance with greater freedom and might for the welfare not only of individual souls, but also of social life as a whole. The spirits of the age, which seem to threaten its very existence, science, politics social and international, must be brought into the service of one end, the liberation of the religion of Christ, conceived as the worship of God in spirit and in truth, from its narrow ecclesiastical bounds, and its advance to new victories throughout the wide world. Another Pentecost is on the way. May the spirit of the Lord which is freedom and truth find entrance among the children of God with new glory and might !



Rev. JAMES DRUMMOND, M.A., LL.D., D.Litt.

THE SPIRITUAL FACTOR OF LIFE AND MODERN MATERIALISM.

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MATERIALISM, as a philosophical hypothesis, cannot be regarded as a serious force, or one dangerous to religion, at the present day. Some thirty years ago, it raised its voice with a triumphant note, and men, who are so often misled by words, forgetting that Evolution was a process and not a power, believed that the particles of matter contained in themselves the 'promise and potency' of the highest moral and intellectual attainments. But human reason declines to rest in this conception, and to believe that the mere mechanical movement of atoms is the ultimate reality of things. In spite, however, of this recovery of tone, there is still an air of sadness breathing through the religion of our time, and faith goes about asking wistfully for a home from which the clouds have been lifted, and where the Spirit shines down with unimpeded and gladdening ray; and this is certainly due in part to the enormous advance which has been made in our knowledge of the material universe.

In the first place, the well-grounded belief that physical law has prevailed through all time, and reaches through all space, at least wherever matter is to be found, produces in many minds a curious illusion of thought. Though it is not sufficient to sustain a reasoned materialism, yet there is an uneasy feeling that law has taken the place of God, and that wherever the man of science can prove the existence of a fixed order of phenomena, there the operation of God can no longer be assumed ; and men eagerly grope for some break in the physical chain, where God must demonstrably have interposed with an exercise of miraculous power. But a law, which is only a general statement of a constant order of events, explains nothing ; and order is surely a sign of the presence, not of the absence, of mind. The illusion is due, partly to the influence of habit, which removes our sense of wonder and mystery in contemplating that which we constantly experience, and partly to the remnants of an imperfect theology, which taught us to look for the signs of God's presence in miracle, and to view the marvellous processes of the natural world as undivine. This shadow will pass away from our minds, when we come to regard matter as an expression of spirit, and each beauteous form and ordered sequence as a manifestation of Divine thought.

This suggests a second source of the present misgivings. Science and theology have often entered into sharp antagonism ; and whenever they have done so, science has come off victorious. Beliefs,

which at one time were supposed to rest on the direct testimony of God himself, have crumbled away, one after another, before the advance of knowledge, and the very basis on which Christian theology was supposed to be founded has been utterly and irretrievably shattered. It is a natural effect on the imagination, to conceive of this assault as carried up to the last resorts of faith, and to think of the glorious edifice of worship as sinking into ruins before the batteries of all-conquering intellect. But here, again, we are the victims of illusion. What science has demolished is not the spiritual truth which it is the proper task of theology to interpret, but the imperfect science of early ages which had become attached to theology, but is no part of its permanent structure. Science is supreme in the domain of outward facts, and is perfectly competent to set aside the vague conjectures of primeval man; but it cannot intrude into the unseen temple, where the soul holds communion with God; and it will be found, when the scaffolding is pulled down, that that pure temple will stand forth, like some grand cathedral, in all its magnificent proportions, relieved of a frame-work which concealed its beauty, and weakened the power of its impression.

But there is another kind of materialism which is perhaps, at the present day, a far deeper and more potent cause of unbelief—an unbelief which is not theoretical, but practical. I mean the devotion of men's thought and effort to the accumulation of material wealth, which is greatly stimulated by the

enormous increase in our power of commanding the resources of Nature. A pulpit platitude ! you will exclaim ; but, platitude or no platitude, it is true, and this worship of worldly riches is one of the most terrible dangers that confront us. It is the canker that has slowly eaten away the heart of mighty nations ; and who will say that it has not already laid its blight upon Christendom, teaching men that their life *does* consist in the abundance of the things that they possess, and that the greatness of nations is to be measured by the reach of their grasping avarice, and by their power of destroying, not of helping and ennobling their brethren ? Yet it is not wealth, but the idolatry of wealth, that corrodes the heart. Wealth, acquired by honourable and unselfish toil, is a needed basis of civilization, and may be employed for holy and spiritual ends. But he who is most fully aware of this, is also conscious of the subtle danger which riches bring,—how they dazzle and flatter whatever is selfish in him, and tempt him to set his heart upon them ; and his only resource against these evils is to accept his wealth as a trust from the hand of God, and to use it with a solemn sense of responsibility as the guardian and administrator of a Divine gift. Many a grand soul has thus risen upon the tide of fortune, and still remembered that his treasure was not in gold and jewels, but in a spirit linked to the Spirit of God, in lofty and disinterested thought, in spotless honour, and in a lowly and consecrated heart. Society, however, is composed of average people ; and can

we deny that, when wealth and luxury have come in like a flood, the hearts of many are led astray, false and vulgar ideals obtain a pernicious power, and the banner of faith is dragged in the dust ?

If we turn now to the other side of our subject, the spiritual factor of life, our great question is— which is higher, and sees farther into the truth of things, the merely intellectual and prudent man, who deals only with the order of phenomena, and lives only for limited and earthly ends, or the spiritual man, who believes that he is in contact with a transcendent Reality which abides through all changes, and who lives by the light of an ideal holiness ?

In answer to this question, let us observe, in the first place, that spiritual life is a reality, a formative power, dwelling deep in the hearts of saints, and not wholly absent from those who deny its postulates, or even those who are unconscious of its existence. Even in the lowest and meanest are there not sparks of heavenly light that flicker across the dark abyss, soft echoes of a diviner world that are sometimes heard when the clamours of earth are still ? But in what multitudes has this life within their life been an acknowledged power, a Spirit bearing witness with their spirits that they were children of God, an ideal alluring them to other worlds, a calm upon the restless heart, brooding over it with a sweet purity and love ! This life is the life of God in the soul of man ; for, if gravitation manifests the ultimate power that underlies the universe, no less certainly holiness, justice, and love manifest,

or rather are, the Eternal Spirit abiding in us, and revealing themselves as the deep things of God. And if in most of us this life does not dwell with such overpowering fulness, yet, when we see it in others, our hearts bound with affection and reverence, and, while we gratefully lay our garlands at the feet of saints, we recognize in them the true pattern of humanity. And, indeed, if we reflect, we shall see that, in spite of all our faults, the spiritual has so interpenetrated our thoughts and ways that it is difficult for us to imagine what life would be if it were wholly withdrawn; if we were tied down to hard material fact; if admiration, reverence, and worship lay dead within us, and the long struggle of mankind for righteousness, for the coming of a Kingdom of God, for the manifestation of his sons, appeared to us only as the mocking dream of fools. Even when we are least spiritual, the heavenly voice still speaks to us; when we are most sinful we are conscious of the Higher Will whose laws we are transgressing. And, if our hearts are too impure to reflect God's perfect image, still his light flashes on their troubled waves, and makes us yearn for a holy calm,—when all the storms of self will be laid to sleep, and we shall see him as he is.

It is this hidden life of the soul, on which, in modern times, we must place our chief reliance as an evidence of the truths of religion. Formerly, there was a tendency among Christian apologists to run down this kind of appeal, and to dwell upon the dark abyss of absurdity in the unassisted human mind,

in order to show the necessity for Christ, and, as it was thought, to enhance his glory. Far be it from me to say a word that could diminish the glory of that transcendent soul, whose spirit is so deeply needed to heal the sickness of the world, and to tame the pride, the avarice, and the savagery of nations. But spiritual things *must* be spiritually discerned; and not only has the old apparatus of miracle and testimony lost its power of convincing the intellect, but we have come to see that true religion must rest on far other foundations, and that intellect alone, however complete its proofs, is powerless to create that faith in which the soul lies open towards God to receive a rill of his infinite life. It is the function of the intellect to interpret, to formulate, to co-ordinate the different realms of knowledge, not to create; and in religion, it must draw its data from the deep wells of the spirit. Even to the human Christ we cannot be brought by way of the discursive understanding, however welcome the light which may thus be thrown upon the circumstances of his lot. The inward and essential man cannot be discovered by the shrewdest wit. The Lord is the Spirit; and no man can come to him unless the Father draw him. But when, through this Divine attraction, we are drawn so near to him that we look with direct gaze upon the glory that encircles him, we ask for no other evidence—we believe and know that this is the eternal life, the life which alone redeems men from slavery to the perishing forms of falsehood and sin, and constitutes the true end of their being.

This private experience throws a new light upon the course of history. Instead of seeing a godless mass of blind and stupid heathenism, we perceive that a Divine Word has been present through all the world's groaning and travailing, slowly evolving the highest human attributes, drawing men on, through all their devious wanderings, through all their lapses and failures, still ever on towards the consummate perfection of their nature. It was not that the silence of eternity might be startled by a momentary voice from heaven, not that there might be a sudden revelation of that of which philosopher had never thought, or poet dreamed, or prophet spoken, not to make an irruption, as it were, of Deity into an undivine realm, that Christ came; but to fulfil the age-long promise whispered in the heart of man,—those vaticinations of a glory to be revealed which have never been silent since first man bent the knee in prayer. And so we listen, not only to the private oracles in our own breasts, but to a great volume of attestation coming from all climes and ages, proclaiming that the tabernacle of God is with men, and that he has never left himself without a witness.

It is, then, the Divinity within us that draws us to Christ; and unless we believed in God, and believed in him spiritually, as One in whom we live and move, who speaks to our hearts and answers our prayers, we could not believe in Christ. And, nevertheless, it is true that, when we believe in him, a flood of light is shed upon many a dim experience from the richness and fulness of that gracious

life, and his advent marked a creative epoch in the religion of the world. He was no mere reformer, calling men back to the purity of ancient days, but fused together into a new and living organism the scattered elements of faith; and called on men to rise into that Divine sonship which alone could realize the formative thought of God, and give a final answer to the secret aspirations of the human heart. And so it is through fellowship with himself, through the infusion of the same spirit, through our entrance into the same deep, interior life, that he in his turn brings us to the Father who has led us to him, and thereby completely interprets the long Divine process which has been educating mankind, and gives us at last perfect rest and peace in the submission of our wills to the Will of God, not through the reluctant obedience of duty, but through the holy self-sacrifice and communion of Love.

And now let us ask, in conclusion—If these things are true, what is the proper work of Liberal theologians? It is surely something far higher and nobler than promulgating a system of negation. It is, indeed, well to be mighty in pulling down the strongholds of error; but, if we could only strew the ground with ruins, ours were a thankless task. It is for us to revive the drooping fires of faith, and, when we have removed the obstructions that have spread themselves between the soul and God, to lead men deeper into that spiritual life which has breathed through all the Christian ages, and found a home in every Christian Church. We need a new Reforma-

tion,—not so much a reconstruction of theology, as a rekindling of religion in its originality and power, a deepening of the Christ-life in the heart of mankind. We must proclaim grander social and national Ideals, and, in the midst of a mocking and unbelieving generation, labour, still undaunted, for the Kingdom of God. Christ is being crucified daily in his own Christendom ; and men wag their heads at him, saying, ‘Lord, Lord,’ while they flout and despise his teaching. But still his life abides,—the only eternal life. May it come quickly, and establish the fraternity of man,—the reign of Justice and of Love !

RELIGIOUS THOUGHT IN ENGLAND AT THE CLOSE OF THE NINETEENTH CENTURY.

BY THE REV. R. A. ARMSTRONG, B.A., LIVERPOOL.

OBVIOUSLY in the time allotted I can deal with but a few selected aspects of Religious Thought in England at the close of the Nineteenth Century, and with those in but the broadest way. Serious thinking on religion in this country, among those who still believe in a theology, seems more and more to concentrate itself about the doctrine of the Incarnation. It is mainly on recently current thinking on this theme that I shall speak to-day.

The first thing that strikes me, however, in English Religious Thinking as the century drew to its close is the breadth of its scepticism, the profundity of its agnosticism. To this I shall have to return more than once. But I ask you now to realize that much that passes for most orthodox is in reality saturated with agnosticism. Martineau showed long ago how one in so good savour of orthodoxy as Bishop Butler in reality walked on the edge of the precipice of an absolute scepticism. In the time of our own fathers Dean Mansel played

the like game. But the closing decade of the century saw a similar position more unblushingly assumed in the famous treatise of Mr. Balfour, whose final argument for the acceptance of current creeds is at bottom a confession that neither the men of religion nor the men of science really know anything about anything at all.

But no recent writer has set the essentially negative position of cultivated modern orthodoxy in a clearer light than Dr. Percy Gardner in his '*Exploratio Evangelica*.' 'A great part,' says he, 'of the historical substratum which is supposed to support many of the doctrines and beliefs of Christianity is in a ruinous condition.' And he sets to work 'to seek elsewhere' 'a sufficient foundation for Christian faith.' The doctrine accepted at any period, according to him, is simply the reflection of life as it then is. Thus as life, conduct, and sentiment shift, doctrine necessarily shifts no less. The ideas and principles which form life at any time the men of that time strive to justify to the intellect. And as the original feeling which gave life to those principles cools, 'doctrine is deposited like crystals.' Thus the historical method is brought to bear on doctrine as well as on all else; and the most sacred creeds concerning God, Man, and Eternal Life, like everything else in the universe, fall into the melting-pot of evolution. The men of yesterday, of to-day, of to-morrow can think and believe no other than that which corresponds to the stage of their culture attained yesterday, to-day, or to-morrow.

They may flatter themselves that they are constructing their doctrinal system by process of abstract reason dealing with eternal fact. But they are for ever deceived. What seems the most rigid demonstration is in fact but the proceed of a particular level of life and feeling.

Now in all this there is doubtless a considerable modicum of truth. It is at any rate the direct inference from Dr. Gardner's initial position, though not presented by him in so naked a form. But the true religious thinker cannot rest in such a position unqualified. To believe that all you believe to-day will be necessarily disbelieved by the best men to-morrow, is not to believe at all, but to reduce all doctrine to the rank of a mere momentary working hypothesis. It is blank scepticism, sheer agnosticism. In all genuine theological thinking, the thinker, though he recognize his subjectivity to evolution, must think the doctrine in which he finds intellectual satisfaction true, not a mere temporary formula. He may recognize that it is partial truth only, relative truth only, but as far as it goes he must believe it true. I cannot, for instance, at the same time believe in a Personal God and believe that in the course of evolution the attribute personality will be seen to be inapplicable to God. I cannot to-day believe that God was incarnate in Jesus Christ, yet hold that to-morrow such a belief is likely to be dissolved in a higher truth. We must either be frankly sceptical, or else believe that in a certain sense we can attain finality.

And so we are compelled, in spite of the claims of the historic method and the recognition of evolution, the great achievements of the nineteenth century, to discuss such doctrines as the Incarnation or the Trinity on their merits, or what we suppose to be their merits, no less peremptorily now in 1901 than did our grandfathers in 1801. We adduce probably very different arguments for or against, but if we claim a legitimate place for theology in human thinking at all, we have to discuss these doctrines *pro* or *contra* with straight arguments directed rigidly upon them. Our question will not be, 'Does this doctrine make for clearer faith or for purer conduct?' Our question will be, 'Is this doctrine true?' And wherever there is fundamental faith in the harmony of the spiritual universe, we shall be supported by the underlying conviction, that in the end what is most true will most make for religion and for righteousness. He who shapes doctrine for ethical purposes is guilty of a profound immorality and a profound infidelity.

It is a curious and interesting phenomenon that while the champions of Trinitarian doctrine at the beginning of the nineteenth century championed it as a demand on faith made by authority, a thing difficult to believe, seemingly contrary to reason, but revealed from on high, the champions of Trinitarian doctrine at the close of the nineteenth century championed it as the only doctrine yielding philosophical satisfaction, and as required to remove the intellectual difficulties inherent in Unitarian

heresy. The popular writers of the day make it a commonplace that to teach the unqualified unity of God is to be guilty of the grossest lack of philosophy. Such is the tone of such eminent preachers as Dr. Watson, of Liverpool, and Mr. Campbell, of Brighton ; and they have, of course, the support of names of much higher renown. The evangelical church-goer of a century since was taught that the Unitarian was a very bad man, however tempting his doctrine to mere carnal reason. The evangelical church-goer of to-day is often taught that the Unitarian is a remarkably good man, but that his doctrine is wholly unreasonable. We are reproached to-day by the characteristic thinkers, not for infidelity, but for sore lack of philosophy. It is probably just about a hundred years since William Cobbett in one of his genial moods, as quoted in 'The Etchingham Letters,' wrote : 'The Unitarians will not believe in the Trinity because they cannot account for it. . . . I do most heartily despise this priggish set for their conceit and impudence.'

The main philosophical difficulties which the orthodox apologist of to-day sees in the Unitarian doctrine are two : first, that it ascribes an unrelieved loneliness to God ; secondly, that it fails to explain communion between God and man.

Let us glance at these two difficulties as articulated in England at the close of the nineteenth century. It is said that, if the nature of God be Love, there must have existed eternally an object on which that love could be expended. But if man

and kindred children of God be creatures of time, if the universe itself be a birth of time, prior to the appearance of the universe, God must have been without such object for his love unless he could find it within his own being. But he could not so find it unless his own being comprised a personal plurality. And the Trinity provides such a plurality. 'God,' says Mr. Campbell, 'goes forth from himself in the Eternal Son, to return to himself in the Eternal Spirit.' The Father, the Son, and the Spirit 'are a society in unity.' 'God, who objectifies himself in the Eternal Son, returns to himself in the Eternal Spirit.' The Spirit 'completes the the cycle of the Divine society.' Christian theology has maintained the like theses before; but it would be hard to find a Father or a Schoolman who has put it more baldly than it is put in these phrases of Mr. Campbell; and this is the characteristic and popular English preaching with which the century closed.

When such a preacher becomes conscious that he runs the danger of inculcating tritheism, he at once empties the term *persona* or person of all that makes it adequate to sustain the part here ascribed to it. *Persona*, it is explained, is, after all, merely a self-manifestation, a function, an aspect; and we are presented with the idea of one self-manifestation loving another, the second function of the one personality supplying an object of love to the first function.

Professor Knight, in the interesting corre-

spondence with Dr. Martineau which he has just given to the world, had recourse to the same expedient to provide an eternal sphere for the Divine love. He says that he does not see 'how the Divine love could have been an everlasting reality, outflowing from a Divine centre, except on the theory of an *eternal Duality within the Divine Nature itself*.' Professor Knight, while formally admitting the Trinitarian doctrine, does not cumber himself with any contention beyond the duality of God. He is content with the society of two, and so escapes the straits so many theologians are put to to discover some distinct and adequate function for the third member of the Divine company. Dr. Martineau, however, is no more prepared to admit the duality than the trinity of the Godhead. '*An object loved*,' says he, 'cannot be *within the loving nature*, without reducing the love to a form of *self-love*.' His correspondent speaks of a 'duality within the Divine *Personality*.' But such a conception does not relieve God of the 'solitude' and 'selfishness' which it is sought to escape. It will not do, thinks Martineau, for his friend to rest his case on 'two somewhats in one Person ; it requires two *Persons* in one God,' and the 'conditions of Ditheism are surely complete.' The demands of God's eternal love are met by Dr. Martineau with 'a perpetual Cosmos.'

But the modern theologian further charges it against Unitarianism that it fails to explain the communion between God and Man.

It is impossible, it is said, to conceive of such communion apart from the orthodox doctrine. The finite, Man, cannot apprehend the infinite, God. Accordingly a God-Man is conceived in whom the finite and the infinite commingle, and the gulf is thus represented to be bridged. It is characteristic of the English religious thinking at the close of the nineteenth century that this incarnation of God in Man is extended from the typical instance of Jesus Christ to mankind at large. The doctrine of the Incarnation is made to include the Incarnation of God in ordinary men. And here the left wing of the evangelical Trinitarians—men like Dr. Clifford—appear to meet the right wing of those who still, I believe, consider themselves as Unitarians, and whom we are all glad to consider so.

One has to remark on this phase of religious thinking that it is difficult to understand exactly what is meant by 'Incarnation' on the lips of those who enunciate it. 'Enfleshing' is not a spiritual idea; and though the theologians use the language of the flesh, they undoubtedly wish to describe a phenomenon of the spirit. In the Incarnation, then, whether in Jesus Christ or in all Christian men, we must ask them explicitly to inform us whether they imply a fusion of the persons of God and man into one person, or merely so close a coalescence between God and man as to render the passage of communion from one to the other easy. If they mean an actual unification of person—that God is Christ and Christ is God, that God is the good man and that the good

man is God—then they land us either in Pantheism or in inextricable confusions of thought. If, on the other hand, they mean only a very close approximation of the Divine and the human persons, without interfusion, they in no way relieve the original difficulty.

Whatever philosophical difficulty there may be in conceiving of communion between God in his heaven and man in his closet, there is exactly the same difficulty in conceiving of communion between God and man though enshrined in one temple of flesh.

There is, however, another looseness of terminology against which all must be warned who desire to estimate theological thought in England at the turn of the century. The name Christ is used for at least three several concepts. It is used as a name or title denoting the historical personage Jesus of Nazareth as known to us through the Gospel records. It is used for the Christ now conceived to be exercising a certain spiritual dominion independently of his recorded deeds or words. It is used of an ideal humanity unconfined to any one individual soul. Theologians shift from one to the other without warning and apparently without conscious deviation. But such loose handling of terms is fatal to all true and worthy thinking.

Fix the term Christ to any one of these three concepts rigidly, and two-thirds of the current orthodox apologetics fall away.

Now the Unitarian form of thought, or what may be described as Christian Theism, does not profess to explain the communion of God and man or to tell us by what means God impresses his presence on the human consciousness. It knows that it can explain neither the Divine action nor the human apprehension, any more than we can explain the action of thought on brain or of will on muscle. It recognizes in either case that there is a chasm to be passed, and it can fling no logical bridge across that chasm. But it accepts the fact of experience, an experience attested with overwhelming fulness, as it accepts those other experiences, the fact of a bridge between thought and brain, between will and muscle, between force and matter. It not only accepts the fact of experience, but it accepts it as primary, as fundamental, as the necessary *datum* of all spiritual religion.

We have got to-day to the bottom conflict. Can man become directly conscious of God? Can God impress himself on the consciousness of man? If the answer be 'Yes,' then religion is wrought into the structure of the spiritual universe. It may be eclipsed, overshadowed, submerged. But it exists for ever. It is indestructible; it is secure. If the answer be 'No,' then theology after theology may be put forward to save religion, but religion is doomed. It is a vast delusion. It cannot be rescued. You may call in Church or Bible as authority. You may call in Christ as Mediator or Revealer. But these are all vain expedients. The facts of

human nature do not support you. If there be no religion at first hand for us, religion at second hand is all in the air ; it is a makeshift and a delusion.

That is what I mean by saying that the current orthodoxies all rest in a quagmire of scepticism, have their roots in the dry sands of agnosticism. They are all contrivances for bolstering up religious belief in minds which reject the essential and bottom fact of religion. Men do not believe that the child of God can directly know his Father ; they do not believe that the soul can be filled with the consciousness of God besetting. The evangelical accordingly presents us with a Christ assumed to possess a spiritual faculty denied to us, and bids us accept from him that which we cannot without him experience ourselves. And we may note in passing that the sacramentalist—no less agnostic—disbelieves in the direct touch of spirit with spirit, and so entrusts the spiritual life to material vessels, in which he does believe ; the sacramentalist of to-day, in his scepticism, exactly reversing the nobler sacramentalism of Newman, who did believe in the life of the spirit, but was very doubtful of the reality of matter, and so saw even in material sacraments only the shadowy symbols of spiritual action.

Finally, if we are to preserve a theology—a philosophy of God and religion—at all, we must take to heart the grave warning Dr Gardner gives us. He shows how Jewish Christianity meeting the broad and mighty stream of Hellenic thought was forced, if it was to live, to adjust itself to that new

and vast environment, and so had to modify every fibre of its intellectual structure ; and he points out that Christianity to-day is called to an encounter still more tremendous, and therefore to an adjustment still more penetrating and searching. 'The same kind of change must come over' modern Christianity, he says, 'which came over the religion of the first Christian thinkers, when they came forth into the intellectual world of the time, and had to make terms with Greek culture.' At this dawn of the twentieth century, patching and peddling will be of no avail. It is not a matter of repairing a column here and opening a doorway there in the temple of theologic thought. The common apologetics are vain as fitting a steam-engine with wings. Christian thought encounters the vast and majestic idea, the mighty, solvent organon named 'Evolution.' It must take up into itself that supreme idea, it must fashion itself by that potent instrument ; or it must be shattered to a thousand fragments, destroyed from off the face of the earth.

A theology which can pass that test will feed a broad and generous ethics. Religion will once more be the recognized ally of all that is noblest in human struggle and aspiration. It will put away from it for ever ecclesiastical alliances which enchain the intellect, ultimately degrade the character, and give the rule over immortal souls to the secular tyrant and the priest. It will stand for the freedom of nations, for the peace of the world, for the enduring brotherhood of man.

CHURCH AND STATE IN AMERICA.

BY REV. C. W. WENDTE, OF BOSTON, U.S.A.

THERE are two institutions in human society whose adjustment of their mutual relations has been the source of more agitation and strife than any other known in history. They are the State and the Church. The story of European civilization for the past eighteen centuries is largely a record of the struggle between the religious and the political interest. In the New World we are exceptionally and fortunately circumstanced in this respect. Our young civilization is comparatively free from the traditions and tyrannies of a past order of society, while the great preponderance of Protestants in the United States, constituting as they do seven-eighths of our population, secures practical unity of sentiment among us. This unity is imperilled only by open or covert attacks upon the American system of Church and State by the Roman Catholic clergy, and the unreasonable demands made upon our National and State Governments by certain unenlightened and ultra-Protestants for a specific recognition of their religious opinions in the constitution and laws of the land.

The former are a constant menace to the peace and integrity of the Republic. The latter are fortunately few in number, and not at all likely to attain their ends.

It is to show that the true interests of both the religious and political order are best subserved by the separation of these two great institutions in human society, the Church and the State, and the complete secularization of the latter, that I proceed to inquire: What are the ideal relations which, under a Republican form of Government at least, should exist between the Church and the State, and how far does our American system fulfil them?

In theory there are three principal relations which may exist between the civil and the ecclesiastical interest.

The first is that of the supremacy of the Church and the subordination of the State. This is called *Theocracy*. The classical example is the system of the Papacy and the canon law of the Roman Catholic Church. Since the time of Gregory the Seventh the Roman Church has taught that there can be no sovereign political authority, nor any independence for the individual, beyond the limits fixed by the ecclesiastical power.

The State has indeed a qualified independence within its sphere, but what that sphere is is determined by the Church, which thus becomes the ultimate authority in all civil and political concerns. To quote the language of an American Roman Catholic Bishop: 'The State is for the body, the

Church is for the soul. But the soul is superior to the body. Hence the Church is above the State.' This reasoning is supported by appeals to the Scriptures, to tradition, and to other recognized sources of religious authority. The Church having thus the divine right to rule, it follows that its head, the Pope, is the sovereign of the world, and all civil governments are subject to his primacy.

Such, in substance, is the Roman Catholic or Theocratic doctrine of Church and State. True, in common practice the Church has often modified her demands. She has been compelled by the logic of necessity to recognize and treat with civil governments as equals. In the many earthly dilemmas in which the Church has found herself she has, from motives of self-preservation, kept her extreme theories somewhat in abeyance and accepted the situation with the best grace possible. But the doctrine of ecclesiastical supremacy was not surrendered thereby. It was only suspended and kept in reserve, to be again advanced at a more favourable opportunity.

The Theocratic Doctrine, then, is that Church and State should be united, that the Church should, in case of any difference or conflict with the civil power, be superior to it, and the State be subordinated to the Church. It may be believed by some that this doctrine has had its day, and is not likely to reappear again in modern society. But our own generation has seen it developed to a speculative extreme in the dogma of Papal in-

fallibility, a dogma the Church did not dare to advance at the height of her power in Mediæval times.

It is highly improbable that in a thinking and scientific age, and amid the free political institutions of modern Europe and America, the Roman Catholic theory will ever again become the basis of any new order of society. But though it may have little creative power left, it still exerts a great disturbing influence throughout the world. European nations, almost without exception, to-day are rent with discords and struggles which have their source in the political pretensions and worldly aims of the Roman Catholic Church. Even in the United States this Theocratic theory exercises a disturbing influence, prompting those who hold it to open or secret hostility against the principles and institutions which are the strength and glory of our New World civilization,—liberty of conscience and of worship, free schools, a free press, and a free State.

It will be in order, therefore, to examine the nature and merits of the opposite or American theory of Church and State. Before doing so, it is necessary to refer briefly to a second legal relation which may exist between the civil and the ecclesiastical power, namely, a Union of Church and State under one head. The most perfect example now existing of this system we find in Russia, where the Emperor is also the spiritual head of the Greek Church. In a modified form this theory

underlies the Established or State Church of England, and in a still more modified form, the Privileged Evangelical Church of Germany, whose head, the Emperor, governs through a council or synod whose members he himself appoints. I cannot dwell on this system; nor is it necessary, for it is already on the wane, and may be considered as only an intermediate step between the Theocracy of Rome and that entire separation of the Church from the State which is the characteristic doctrine of the American Republic.

I. Let us examine this American theory more closely. The State we may define roughly as social man organized for the purpose of civil government. The Church is social man organized for worship and religious nurture. Thus, in theory, each of these great agencies has its own peculiar functions, and is assigned a distinct sphere for their exercise. Each is to respect the other's right, and not to interfere with the other's operations. This is the theoretical, the ideal conception of the relations between Church and State, and this is generally conceived to be the American view on this subject.

But this is a very partial view of their mutual relations, and by no means the one which actually obtains in American society. There cannot be any such entire separation and yet co-existence of these two powers. In their practical working, Church and State continually interfere with each other, and it is often very difficult to say what is the sphere of each. For example, the Church

represents the spiritual interest, but she has temporal possessions which bring her within the laws and ordinances of the State. To be sure, the Church strenuously denies that the State has any right to interfere with her property arrangements, no matter how they affect the welfare of the community. This is what the Roman Catholic Church says to-day to the American State, as she heaps up millions on millions of property, usually exempt from taxation, held absolutely by one person, the Bishop, and by him only as the representative of a foreign ruler, the Pope; thus forming a continuous and dangerous monopoly in our midst. The American State may sooner or later have to interfere to regulate this great and growing evil, as the Governments of Europe have had to regulate it, but the moment she attempts to do so, the cry of the Church will be, 'Hands off! You are transcending your sphere!' The question then arises: Who is to determine what are the respective spheres of the Church and the State? 'The Church,' answer our Catholic authorities. But then, on this supposition the Church might accomplish any end, no matter how worldly or injurious to the community, by simply declaring it to be a spiritual necessity, and the State would be compelled to submit. Thus the Second National Council of the Roman Catholic Church at Baltimore, in 1866, declared that 'in prescribing anything contrary to the divine law'

(i.e. as interpreted by the Hierarchy) 'the civil power transcends its authority, and has no claim on the obedience of the citizen.' Now, our American principle of Self-government teaches us the contrary, and tells us that the Church should not only be separated from the State, but in all temporal concerns be subordinated to it. Based upon the idea of the Sovereign Power of the people, the State, as the expression of that Sovereignty, is the highest competent authority in American life. It follows, then, that the State cannot allow another power alongside of it vested with superior or even equal right, and absolutely independent of its authority. The State is the supreme power in the land, and whatever individual or institution disobeys its laws and opposes the public interest and will, must give way. To be sure, the State allows its citizens a large measure of individual liberty. It grants certain definite privileges to the family, and to other associations of men, for specific purposes, but only so far as these do not oppose the public will and welfare. Among others, the Church enjoys a certain independence in administering her temporal affairs, but whenever she oversteps the limits of her freedom, and acts against the general good, or does anything to abridge the civil rights of the members of her communion, then the State has a right to interfere and make her superior authority felt. On the other hand, in the sphere of

purely speculative and spiritual interests the Church is sovereign and absolutely free. Here the State confesses its limitations and leaves the spiritual prerogatives of the Church unchallenged and unquestioned.

This, then, is the true American doctrine,—in spiritual concerns the absolute independence of the Church; in temporal affairs the subordination of the Church to the State.

II. Another leading and characteristic feature of the American system remains to be spoken of. The American State does not know *the* Church, or *a* church even, but only churches.

In most European countries, side by side with the government there is usually an established Church, whose institutions are closely interwoven with the thought and life of the people. This being so, the Government cannot but recognize her claims and make the best possible terms with her. In the United States the situation is very different. There exists among us no established Church, but only a large number of scattered sects of greater or less pretension. The Roman Catholic Church, comprising one-eighth of our population, is only a rival sect among the rest. These churches hold widely divergent views; each thinks itself right and the others more or less in the wrong; each claims to be *the* Church. No one among them is sufficiently powerful to overshadow the others. As a matter of simple justice and necessity, therefore, the American State can recog-

nize no one church but only churches. Presbyterian and Unitarian, Protestant and Catholic, Jew and Christian, the Mormon in Utah and Buddhist in San Francisco, are all alike recognized, and receive the same impartial treatment. The State does not investigate or decide concerning their conflicting claims to divine truth and right. It does not discriminate in favour of or against any of them. It does not even know them in their religious, but only in their private and corporate capacity. Their spiritual or traditional origin it has nothing to do with. It deals with them just as it would deal with a college, a benevolent society, a railroad corporation or a bank. They exist under the laws of the State, receive its protection, and are subject to its conditions. With their internal administration the State will have nothing to do. It permits them to make such regulations for their own government as they please, be these Papal, Episcopal, Presbyterian, or Congregational in form. Concerning this it does not inquire. It only demands, first, that the various churches shall not, by overstepping their own canon law, abridge the ecclesiastical rights of their members; second, that no church shall enforce decrees which affect the civil rights of the citizen; and, third, that the teaching and practice of any church shall not contravene the laws of natural morality or injuriously affect the public order and welfare. But unless they do thus conflict with its laws the State leaves them

in peace to work out their own salvation. The Rev. T. B. Forbush in his discussion of this subject says: 'In the eye of the State the churches are organizations for specific ends. Their statutes or charters define those ends. Beyond dealing justly with them, and insisting that they shall deal justly with one another, she has no obligation and should assume none.'

Such is the general understanding in American society concerning the relation between the civil and the ecclesiastical power. Under this system our young nation has enjoyed a degree of political and religious liberty such as no other country can equal, and which has made us, in large degree, the prosperous and powerful people we are to-day. Under this system religion itself has increased, both in the purity of its contents and the scope of its influence. I venture to assert that there is more vital religion in the United States to-day than in any other country. This is chiefly owing to the benign influence of that secular State which it is the fashion in certain circles to denounce as 'godless' and 'profane.'

The enlightened faith and political sagacity of the founders of the American Republic, and its fortunate exemption from the traditions and tyrannies which still retard the progress of many of the nations of the Old World, have made possible this improved relation between Church and State in America. We do not deny that it may have some disadvantages, but we believe they

are outweighed by the positive merits and beneficial results of our system. To maintain it and hand it down unimpaired to posterity is our sacred privilege and duty. While we do not presume to decide what is the best system of Church and State for other peoples, differently circumstanced from our own, we commend the American plan to their candid and careful consideration, in the belief that only as they approximate to it can they realize that ideal of a free Church in a free State, that union of pure religion and perfect liberty, which it is the aim of this Council to promote, and which is the dream at once of the thinker, the patriot, and the free believer.

THE CONTRIBUTION OF FRANCE TO RELIGIOUS PROGRESS.

BY THE REV. ERNEST FONTANÈS, PARIS.

THE great principle of *Non-Subscription* which, as I take it, forms the bond of union of this Assembly, has been maintained in France by those who are known as the Religious Liberals. It would scarcely be correct to classify them under the term 'Unitarian,' inasmuch as the opposition to the dogma of the Trinity was not the origin of their resistance to the system that imposed subscription to Articles of Faith, and Protestants, who had not examined into the traditional dogmas for themselves, yet recognized that any compulsory subscription to a creed would jeopardize at once the sincerity of Faith and the normal development of Christian thought. It has not been without much effort and painful struggle that this principle has spread in our Reformed Churches, nor has it as yet won over the majority. Edgar Quinet, in his admirable book on 'The Revolution,' made it a subject of reproach to the Protestants, at the beginning of the nineteenth century, that they had ceased to keep

alive the propagandist ardour of the Huguenots, and had been content to pass their religious life free from all molestation. The English Revivalists also, who made their appearance on the Continent shortly after the Peace of 1815, attacked this lukewarmness with a harshness which not infrequently injured the success of their cause. They imported a zeal without knowledge, they displayed a fastidious and inquisitorial asceticism, they introduced a worship of the letter which gave the right to any lay brother, however ill-educated, to assume the bearing and the fulminations of a pontiff. They aspired to restore the Church to the rigid conformity of the seventeenth century rather than to the heroic enthusiasm of the sixteenth century, and by their unwarranted questions as to the state of each individual's soul, and by their self-complaisant assumptions of being themselves amongst the elect and the saved, they wounded the susceptibilities of a people sensitive to ridicule, and naturally hostile to affectation and to exaggerations repugnant to good sense. It would of course be unfair to deny that these preachings created in certain quarters a genuine movement of religious life. But if Matthew Arnold is right in supposing that the Puritan movement in England was not indispensable for the revival of the religious life and for the establishment of Freedom, we may well wonder whether in our own country there could not have been a spiritual Revival without this extraneous intervention. Just as in England, where the brilliant critic drew attention to many

symptoms and manifestations full of promise, we too are able to quote amongst other things this utterance of a martyr for political liberty, the famous Pastor Rabaud St. Etienne, who presided over the National Assembly. 'It is about time,' he said, 'to urge upon theologians of all sects the wisdom of simplifying their creeds and of leading us back to the Christianity of Jesus Christ.'

Under the pretext of raising the banner of the Reformation, in the doctrine of Justification by Faith, and of combating the doctrine of Salvation by Works, the Church began to preach salvation through Orthodoxy, and was too ceaselessly pre-occupied in denouncing heresy to perceive that to claim to be saved by fidelity to the letter of a doctrine was just as much to have recourse to a barren *opus operatum*, as was the case of Catholicism in its claim on behalf of works.

There arose a preacher at Nîmes, in the Metropolis that is to say of French Protestantism, who inveighed powerfully against this Intellectualism. This was Samuel Vincent, who constituted Nîmes the capital of the great idea of Liberalism in Religion. He did not belong to that class of Frenchmen who, dazzled by the splendour of the seventeenth century life, as some foreign critic not long since reproachfully observed, 'behind a veritable Chinese wall' of exclusiveness, to the neglect of other literatures. He was master of all the European languages, and was in close touch with all the theological writings of the time. He was known familiarly as the French

Schleiermacher. He had in fact studied the works of this theologian-poet, and he had taken the initiative, at a time by no means favourable to literary activity, in establishing various periodical publications, such as the '*Religious Miscellanies*' and '*Religion and Christianity*,' with a view to liberating his colleagues and co-religionists from an ignorance which had only been pardonable in the era of persecutions and during the wanderings in the Wilderness. In his principal work '*On Protestantism*,'¹ and in his '*Meditations*,'² he laid down that distinction between religion and theology which is now-a-days accepted by everyone, and which is placed as the true foundation of all serious religious endeavours. Himself genuinely liberal, he was concerned for the liberty of others, and he undertook the defence of the Methodists in spite of the disturbing element they were introducing into the churches, as he undertook the defence of the Catholic priests, who, true to the rules of their Church, refused to perform the burial service in the case of Catholics who had died without receiving extreme unction. Broad-minded and conversant with the history of the organization of the Reformed Church, he had no hesitation in declaring for the separation of Church and State, with the avowed object of securing to the Church the responsibility of its own government, and a flexibility necessary for its adaptation to the changing conditions under which it would have to exert its influence.

¹ 2nd edition published in 1859 with a preface by Prevost Paradol.

² 2nd edition with a preface by Athanase Coquerel, the younger.

As early as 1829 he foretold the fall of the temporal power. Accusations overt or thinly disguised under pious phrases left him unshaken. He withstood resolutely the mania for multiplying regulations, for manufacturing shibboleths, and for sifting the Church, maintaining that some questions must be left open, that attempts at explaining everything must be renounced, and that the Church should strive solely to fortify men's consciences and deepen and train their wills. He boldly declared that a little anarchy would do the Church no great harm, for the French Protestants stood in need of being raised to the general level of European religious culture, and might not unprofitably investigate, compare and modify old and new positions. He proclaimed that Protestantism was *the religion of modern times*, and he gave a definition of it which has come to be the watchword or banner of the Liberals: '*Protestantism*,' he said, '*is in its essence, the Gospel, and in its form, Freedom.*' It is an excellent definition, nor have the defenders of Orthodoxy within the Reformed Churches been slow to appropriate it when appealing to the general public, and when they have been more bent on gaining adherence to Protestantism than on remaining faithful to their sectarian creed. Samuel Vincent had no faith in violent and revolutionary methods; he mistrusted rigid foregone conclusions, the inevitable forerunners of intolerance and bigotry. He relied solely on the power of Truth and on the progressive, though comparatively slow, working of the Gospel. He was no gloomy pessimist. He laid

no stress on the dogma of original sin and of natural depravity, building his faith on that human nature, which in spite of its sinfulness and its lethargy is never entirely out of sympathy and relationship with a spiritual Christianity. Instead of imposing increasingly rigid regulations and setting up implacable tribunals, he urged the adoption of a system of general and negative agreements, preferably oral so as to be readily revocable, whose function it should be to prevent long and violent controversies, and to restore by sweet reasonableness any temporarily disturbed concord.

One of his disciples, his young colleague, Ferdinand Fontanès, entrusted with the religious training of the young people in the Church at Nîmes, had an opportunity given him of bearing striking testimony to the non-subscribing principle. Two vacancies to Theological Professorships were announced at Montauban in 1824 as open to competition. Though the examiners candidly acknowledged the manifest superiority of Vincent's disciple, they yielded to the unfriendly representations of the candidate's colleagues, and by way of forestalling the reproaches of the more ardent amongst the orthodox, confronted him with a test, and added that unless he set his hand to this declaration of Faith, they could not give their support to his candidature. Although the terms of this improvised Test did not as a matter of fact run counter to his own doctrinal position, Ferdinand Fontanès, considering that he was applying for a

Chair of Theological Science, declined to trammel the freedom of his studies and the teachings of experience. So quickly excited were orthodox prejudices in those days, that the translation of Neander's 'Apostolic Age' by this uncompromising advocate of the non-subscribing principle was actually denounced some years later as imperilling the Faith of the Church!

Under the reign of Louis Philippe the National Church came largely under the influence of the middle classes, and was dominated by the Orleanist spirit. Its activity was spent in ecclesiastical wrangles in which the freedom from the yoke of creeds was at stake. The Councils of the Church were elected by a privileged electoral body (*un corps censitaire*) in accordance with the provisions of the law of Germinal. The Consistories pleaded that no difficulties should be placed in the path of the Orleanist Administration, already hard pressed by the Legitimist and Catholic party, and implored the Churches to lie low in their intrenchments and beware of being beguiled into propagandist efforts which the civil authorities alleged were a fruitful cause of public disorder. Permission was refused to open places of worship, or to hold a meeting of more than twenty persons without a special order from the Mayor or the Prefect of Police, and one can readily imagine the endless traditional objections that the authorities would be capable of opposing to any such requests. Count *Agénor de Gasparin* in the House directed frequent eloquent

protestations against these restrictions of religious liberty, but all in vain, notwithstanding the sympathy awaked in the minds even of his adversaries by his heroic advocacy. Thanks to the preponderating influence of M. Guizot and the orthodox ladies whose husbands supported the politics of the great Minister, the professors who were elected to the Faculty at Montauban, without reference to the Churches and without being subjected to a competitive trial, owed their positions to the favour which they found in the eyes of the 'Mothers of the Church.' Academic degrees were no longer held in repute. All that was needed of any man now was *fidelity* to the doctrine, or rather to the *terminology* of Orthodoxy.

Athanase Coquerel, the eminent preacher, who had been brought up by an English aunt, who was a Unitarian, and his eldest son Athanase, *non longo proximus intervallo*, had both alike contributed by their eloquence to foster in the pulpits of Paris the habit of investigation and respect for those convictions which, having abandoned the letter of the traditional dogmas, sought to re-establish the simplicity and spirituality of primitive Christianity.

After the thunderbolt of the Revolution of 1848 the Protestants experienced the need of conferring with each other as to their future and the interests of their churches. The Consistories profited by the liberty of Association which had just recently been proclaimed, to elect delegates to a non-official Assembly which met *proprio motu* at Paris in

September, 1848. No sooner had it opened than a great debate took place on the system of imposing subscription to Articles of Faith. Everyone felt who breathed this fresh air of liberty which had succeeded to the stifling atmosphere of the late Monarchy with its property qualification franchise (*la monarchie censitaire*) that the Rochelle *Confession of Faith* had fallen into desuetude, and that it would be vain to attempt to reinstate it as a law of the Church. But now the advocates of the system of Confessions of Faith pleaded powerfully with the delegates to set about creating at once a new Confession of Faith. A few impatient Liberals had solemnly moved to repeal the Rochelle Confession of Faith. But this vigorous and straightforward act did not fit in with the mood of the Assembly. The majority rejected the proposal, and contented themselves with addressing a kind of religious Charge to the congregations. The *non-subscribing principle* had not, it is true, achieved a complete success, but it had not been defeated. In the Consistories, where a Liberal spirit reigned, the *statu quo* was preserved, and young candidates for the Ministry might now be ordained without being called upon to subscribe to any dogmatic formulary.

This partial victory of Nonconformist Liberalism was doomed, however, after the 'terrible year,' to be succeeded by a crushing defeat, which no longer enabled the Reformed Churches to represent the principle of Religious Freedom. M. Thiers had, in

a weak moment, granted his old rival, M. Guizot, an opportunity of calling together an official synod with a view to re-establishing peace within the Churches. 'M. Guizot's influence,' said a leader of thought recently, 'has been calamitous to Protestantism.' The statesman in him had silenced the historian of civilization. He it was who, whilst in power, was responsible for the dictum that in 'foreign affairs France and Catholicism are synonymous terms.' He therefore urged all the Churches to share in the trials of the Papacy, whose temporal sovereignty, he declared, was indispensable to the proper functioning of the Catholic Church. In order to oppose the rationalistic spirit which he saw was destroying the old conceptions of the supernatural, he advocated a coalition of all the Christian societies.

The majority of this synod of 1872, recognizing that the Rochelle Confession of Faith had no longer the character or power of an authoritative law, busied themselves in creating a new profession of faith to be based on the '*Apostles' Creed*.' What a curious retrograde procedure in ecclesiastical politics! During the ecclesiastical struggles of the middle of the century the orthodox party had spoken with supreme disdain of this document which the Liberals had opposed to the dogmas that had become mere unintelligible shibboleths to simple folk, though highly effective instruments for purposes of proscription and excommunication. But, of course, the avowed object of this manœuvre was to embarrass certain ministers who had damaged

themselves by their outspokenness, and thus either to silence them or eject them quietly out of the Church. The new Confession of Faith was carried by a small majority, and declared to be the basis of the Church. But though the orthodox party have succeeded in procuring from the Government of May 26th its authority to make this document the subject of compulsory teaching in the Church, they have failed, in spite of all the prejudice aroused by them against the Liberals, to make this Declaration of Faith the Charter of the Reformed Churches, and failed in particular to make it compulsory at ordinations.

This decision of the Synod of 1872 was the inevitable sequel to a movement of alarm and reaction caused by the 'Strasburg Review.' This Review, founded by Ed. Scherer and Colani, had subjected to a fearless criticism all the traditional doctrines, and had applied to the study of Theology the historical and experimental method.

Whatever one may say about this offensive retrograde step to the principle of subscription to articles of faith, the fact remains that the attempt of the Synod of 1872 to establish a protective barrier against heresy has signally failed. And though orthodoxy may impose its curtailed creed on a quite unofficial conference of ministers, it cannot prevent the annual roll-call of the *Nonconformist* clergy. The more serious the times are becoming, the more that social problems appeal to the attention of Christian people, the more untrammelled and

scientific the labours of theologians become, the more self-evident does it appear that the bond of union of a religious society ought no longer to be sought in giving intellectual adhesion to a doctrine, which one is to repeat as a devotee tells his beads ; but must be sought in a common spiritual feeling, in a moral disposition, in a living and active will. Theologians who have lived in close intimacy with Vinet, have not as yet renounced the custom of subscribing to articles of faith ; but, complying with the principles and the example of their master, they see to it that these articles shall be simple, and essentially ethical,—suitable at once to the needs of a child or of an old man on his death-bed. The more they are permeated with this inner spirit of Christianity, and pure mysticism, which rests directly on the moral consciousness, the more will they perceive that dogmatic declarations are all mere crumbling props, and by no means the genuine medium of the Christian spirit, and that they must no longer seek uniformity of opinion in a *minimum* of intellectual faith ; but in a harmony of hearts and wills, the genuine source of true life. If his gentleness, his meekness, his concern for the weak, his dread of all that has the look of violence and destruction, prevented Vinet from drawing the true consequences of his own principles, and from separating what had grown old, worn-out, and dead from what is eternally young and living, the hour has now surely come for us when we can no longer pour the new wine into old wine skins. A pro-

found thinker, Secretan, who represents the philosophical element in the school of Vinet, has given expression to his experiences and his hopes about this question on which the future of the Christian churches so largely depends, in these words: 'To found the Church on a profession of Faith, is to stunt it by crippling its members. It is to doom it to endless internal conflicts.'

Whilst the Empire was devoting itself to hinder by administrative measures any religious movements which might cause offence to the Catholic Church, a large-hearted clergyman, with the *verve* of the high-spirited South, who had witnessed in his childhood at Nîmes, his native town, the fervours of religious fanaticism heated by political passions, Martin-Paschoud—whose theology had been renewed and broadened during the silent hours of a long illness—felt himself inspired by a beautiful thought of his friend, the illustrious Lamartine:—

'Je rencontre un ami dans tout homme qui prie.'

'I see a friend in every prayerful soul.'

Eager to put an end to the quarrels arising from the imposition of creeds, he conceived the project of uniting all men of goodwill into a great association constituted on a basis of benevolence, the common ground of gospel teaching, and without requiring any breach with one's own particular church. His eloquence rallied about him men from various Catholic, Reformed, and Greek Orthodox churches, and as of old the door-keepers of the temple, so now the very police were touched and seized with ad-

miration for such kindling and unsectarian speech. The *Universal Christian Alliance* was founded with enthusiasm ; but was straightway honoured with those sinister insinuations which await all endeavours that look beyond the restricted horizon of narrow minds. In his horror of ill-bred and over-weening proselytism, Martin-Paschoud had hoped that the inspirations of the heart would alone suffice to overthrow all hostile barriers, and that true Christians would recognize one another, and unite to propagate the love of God and the love of man. 'What do you behold ?' he exclaimed to a great concourse vibrating in unison to his appeal. 'Catholics submissive to the authority of the Church ? No. Protestants submissive to the authority of Luther or of Calvin ? No. You behold men submissive to the authority of Truth !' It was all an illusion. Catholics who are no longer submissive to the authority of the Church have ceased to belong to the Catholic Church, and it would not be long before their pacific and tolerant natures would draw down upon them the condemnation of the religious authority, if they aspired to find expression abroad in Christian endeavours, or in associations frequented by people who did not hold the Catholic faith. The *Universal Christian Alliance* was little better than a splendid mirage, speedily over-clouded by the darkness of intolerant dogmatism. The venerable Pastor, dazzled by his sublime vision, had given too little weight to the importance of *method*. He had not perceived that it was not really possible to appeal to

the Gospel except by the way of Freedom, and that even those whose hearts had thrilled with joy as they listened to his pleading for a union of souls, had not broken their chains so long as they had not placed their altar and their religious life beyond the reach of the Authority that believes itself entrusted with a mission from God to guarantee to men divine revelation, and also to define it. You cannot create from a constituency of slaves, a spiritual society whose essential condition is perfect freedom. A journalist who followed with interest the religious development of our country, reproached the Alliance with not having had the courage to admit that it had taken its origin from American Unitarianism. But he was labouring under an error. The Founder was an entire stranger to that prudence which resembles too often mere cowardice, and his theological culture owed nothing to a foreign influence. It was impulsive, but distinctly original. If, indeed, we were asked who his possible master may have been, we should look rather in the direction of Rousseau.

The ecclesiastical quarrels noised abroad amongst the general public served admirably to deepen amongst the Catholics by birth the prejudice against the body of the Protestant Church who survived the ruin of their beliefs. A respectable instinct withholds them from joining a society where they fear to find neither peace of soul nor independence of thought. The ceremonies of Protestant worship leave in general a favourable impression on the Catholics, particularly

when the celebrant speaks the language of the world and lays no stress on superannuated dogmas. But when the religious need is not sufficiently pronounced, it cannot sustain an effort strong enough to change the religious designation of a family. A kind of point of honour, of filial piety, stands in the way of such a change, and many a middle-class freethinker continues his attachment to a church whose faith he has rejected, and considers a participation in the traditional ritual as the respect due to custom and to the good form of society. As for the working classes in the towns, *the priest conceals God from them*; and once they become disabused as to the efficacy of the magic means of their salvation, they reject *en bloc* every kind of religion, and one sees even Protestants confusing their pastors and their church with the priest and the Roman Catholic Church, being under the impression that a good Republican cannot also be a religious man, for God, they say, is the Master they must get rid of, if they are to be free men. Victims of an education which the systems of Authority in matters of faith have imposed upon them, devoid of any critical spirit, they are unable to make the simplest distinctions, and apply to these problems of the moral life the dictum of the gambler, 'All or nothing,'—'a good Catholic and submissive, or a revolted Catholic and atheistic.' Accordingly, we have heard attentive observers of the fluctuations and monotonous reactions of religious evolution, maintain that, if ever this tunic of Nessus which is strangling the conscience of this

country is to be torn off, it would require the intervention of a kind of glacial period, in which all the prevailing forms of religious life should be submerged and extinguished, so as to leave the human soul free to breathe out into the void its disconsolate prayer, and return like a child to the Heavenly Father, whom it has so long misunderstood and forsaken.

All the same, there have been now for some time noticeable symptoms of a better future. In certain provinces where the Reformation had established churches which persecution alone had uprooted, there have appeared by an atavism of a good kind, serious movements towards Protestantism which a zealous pastor, M. Robert, is directing with success. In Lyon, the second town of France, a spirited young pastor, M. Fulliquet, maintained with triumphant eloquence before a working-class audience that the thesis of his opponent, a sometime Catholic ecclesiastic, was by no means sound, and that the alleged *crimes of God* were nothing but the aberrations of a darkened mind and a confused moral sense.

The increasing attention given to social questions has produced amongst the younger orthodox clergy an expansion of view which neither past ecclesiastical conflicts nor critical efforts succeeded in achieving. Just as missionaries whom contact with non-civilized races has convinced of the necessity of stripping the Gospel of its dry dogmatic husk, discovering its powerlessness to feed

the spiritual life, so those who are desirous of reaching the people, the multitudes who wander like sheep having no shepherd, and to whom too long a stone has been offered instead of bread, have been led inevitably to relegate to the museum of antiquities many formulas and practices once serviceable enough as weapons of war, and to concentrate their efforts and their propaganda upon the inner moral nature of men, upon the sense of sin, upon the trust in the eternal love, and upon helpfulness to mankind, things which are the very soul of the Gospel of the Son of Man. A Christianity simplified and concentrated upon principles, of which Christ himself was the Apostle and the Incarnation, will alone succeed in drawing and retaining the multitudes, and in substituting for the old quarrels and schisms the methods of peace and a unity based on liberty. Then, again, the number of lapsed clergy goes on increasing, and the motives for these lapses are highly praiseworthy. There is a ferment amongst the clergy that augurs well for the future: men's minds are awakening, their consciences are asserting their authority, there is a craving for more light, a desire for less superstition and pious materialism, for a deeper moral and spiritual life and a genuine sincerity.

We cannot report any conversion of the intellectual classes to Protestantism, nor even to Theism, but it is quite evident that the positivist systems with their exclusively determinist philosophy have lost their prestige and their audacity; and under

the débris of these systems, strewn on the ground like oaks felled by the woodman's axe, a better soil is being prepared to quicken the roots of the spiritual life. Anthropology disentangled itself gradually from the despotism of anatomy and physiology, and the bungling pseudo-scientist has carried in his very method the condemnation of that pseudo-sociology which made a fetish of the cephalic index.

The abstract Psychology of Eclecticism stands condemned, but on the other hand no one imagines that a man can be entirely accounted for in a chemical retort. The old-fashioned dualism of matter and mind which Scholasticism had consecrated in the interests of Theocracy, has received its condemnation by an observation of facts ; and a doctrine of Monism, at times no doubt unbalanced, sways contemporary thought. But the facts of the moral life, the intuitions and obligations of the inner man which postulate a hereafter and a beyond are recognized and studied in an absolutely independent spirit. With the power and brilliance of a master, M. Boutroux has carried on the reaction against the seductions of that Determinism which had found its logical conclusion in the old Fatalism ; and as a consequence of arduous studies which have familiarized for him the results of the physical sciences, he has succeeded in establishing the truth that the laws of Nature themselves do not escape a certain element of contingency, and that consequently there is nothing singular or anti-scientific in claiming

for the phenomena of social life and of the inner life of the individual that same element of contingency, that same free play which the physical laws have not entirely eliminated in the world of matter. 'An *antecedent*,' he has said, 'is an *influence*, but not strictly speaking a *cause*.' The time-honoured antithesis of Materialism and Spiritualism, with its absolute and hard and fast character, is no longer in harmony with the state of contemporary thought; and M. Boutroux has disengaged from the mass of the observations and verifications of modern labours this affirmation, which shines as a veritable light at the inauguration of a new synthesis of the physiological and psychological sciences: 'There is *no such thing as inert matter, and that which constitutes the essence of matter is in direct relationship with that which constitutes the essence of mind*.' MM. Renouvier and Pilon, starting out from an Agnosticism more or less vague, have ended by establishing in the name of the moral consciousness a personal Theism. It cannot exactly be said that they have created a following, but their *neo-criticism* has rallied to them the sympathies of all those who are concerned to uphold the dignity of human personality. It is allowable also to expect from the People's Universities, our equivalent to the University Extension movement in England, an expansion of thought and an initiation into the moral problems which prepare the ground for the germination and fructification of the spiritual life and its aspirations. These Universities are not copies of your University Extension

movements, nor of your admirable *Settlements*, but they are an independent evidence that under similar intellectual conditions, and notwithstanding profound differences, the human soul, at certain moments, stirred by the same needs, utters a harmonious sound testifying to its common origin. The People's Universities are very jealous of their independence, and of the special purpose for which they were called into existence. They aspire to be self-supporting, and subservient to the one purpose of emancipating and developing human nature. Well, the better cultivated the ground becomes, the more abundant will the harvest be; the more the human soul is opened out and enriched, the more spiritual will it become, and the closer will it cling to that Supreme Reality, that Moral Perfection from which it took its birth.

In drawing to a conclusion, let me mention what I believe to be the conditions of a religious propaganda amongst our population of the Latin race. I am persuaded, first of all, that we ought to avoid the temptation, to which the Church of Rome succumbed, of making it our first care to increase our numbers and boast of a majority. This ambition has beguiled the Church into pandering to popular superstitions. We must accept the situation that we are in a minority, while remembering that in the moral world it is not the big battalions that decide the direction of human progress. Far from casting an anxious glance on our small numbers let us rather ask whether we have kept the spiritual leaven fresh

and living, or whether we have put our light under a bushel ; whether we are like the city set on a hill, or whether we have sunk back again into the shadows and dull round of uninspired mediocrity.

Further, we must diligently espouse the brave and earnest counsel of M. de Bunsen (sometime Prussian Ambassador in London) as our watchword and battle-cry, if we would assure the triumph of the Gospel in the modern world. '*Translate,*' said he, '*the Shemitic into the Japhetic.*' Too often in fact, modern Christians speak an unknown tongue which is a fruitful cause of grievous mistakes and misunderstandings, just as in the past by a worship of the letter it created mythologies and dogmas fatal to the spread and fruition of the Gospel. The *dialect of Canaan* injures the influence of the Gospel and provides a ready handle to the mocking spirit. Your own Carlyle, in vigorous language that shook the intellectual torpor of the times, reminded us that each generation should fit its garment to its growth and invest the eternal truths in ever new and fresh forms, lest, being stereotyped in the expressions of another age, they become obscure and meaningless.

And lastly, Christian propaganda will not be successful unless it be animated by the spirit which has found utterance in the watchword, 'Back to Jesus.' The Religious Renaissance can only succeed in storming the gates of Hell if it is Christian. To neglect the living power and unique attraction of the commanding personality of Jesus of Nazareth would be to incur gratuitously a doom

of barren abstraction. If the end and aim of all the efforts of Humanity is to realize in every sphere of its activity a sovereign idea, a joyful ideal, how can we ignore *him* who has been in himself the incarnation of the purest and intensest spiritual and moral life?

To return to the historical living Christ does not necessarily involve the scrupulous assent, as of a Scribe, to all the details and features of that life as it has been transformed for us by the enthusiasm of the first witnesses. Criticism may here and there constrain us to substitute a hard and strange reality for sweet and fascinating poetry. Why should we complain? Have we not evidences, in the historical portions of the Gospels, of a spiritual nature far more attractive than that portrayed for us by legend? Is not that the Rock on which we can base our unshaken conviction that we are not the dupes of imagination, and is it not a ground for joy that such a character belongs to our common humanity? It is no light gain to our poor race, the prey of so many gross passions, to discover in the life of one of its own children an image of what the race may be, of what it may become. Let us not be beguiled by a false mysticism, which, following in the wake of Catholic piety, ever on the look-out for apparitions of the Virgin, would venture to count on special manifestations of Christ and on his direct response to our immediate questions.

In the enthusiasm and gratitude aroused in us by

the labours of Christ we may lament that he is not in our very midst now, to solve the problems that weigh us down; and yet one of his most fervent disciples reports him as saying that it *was profitable that he should go away*. To escape from the barrenness of abstract questions it may indeed be wise to ask what Jesus would do if he were living here and now, but on this condition, that we do not let our question snare us into the wiles of spiritualism, remembering that if Jesus did come amongst us now, his first act would surely be to divest himself of the merely local and natural form under which he lived in the past, appearing no longer as a Jew or a Galilean but as a modern man, and we can have no better means of knowing what he would do to-day than by seeking through reflection and observation to discover what would be a faithful application of the principles he represented nineteen centuries ago. We ought to guard against supposing that the Christ of History would speak with the consciousness of a man of modern times, seeing that two thousand years of added experience and study have inevitably modified the modern man's point of view.

Instead, however, of exhausting our energies in barren endeavours to guess what the prophet of Nazareth would say, or what solutions he would advocate for our social needs, would it not be far more practical to bring to bear upon the industrial, political, and social conflicts and problems of the times the sentiments experienced by Jesus, and to draw the conclusions contained in germ in his

teachings as to the Fatherhood of God and the Brotherhood of Man? If we would attach to the Gospel the people who have sworn a Hannibalic oath against Catholicism, we must insist on the humanity of Jesus, and by so doing we shall but be following the example of the first Christians, who in order to resist those gnostic tendencies that were reducing Christ to the condition of a phantom, insisted in their earliest declarations on the reality of the humanity of Jesus. We shall only be able to establish a successful propaganda among our contemporaries whom the assertions of dogmatism have revolted, on condition that we maintain that Jesus is not the *object* of Religion, but the *subject* of that Religion that was dimly emerging out of antiquity, and which eventually came to full bloom in this son of Israel. This Religion consists in basing man's trust in a principle of Supreme Love, trust that is in the Heavenly Father. To give us courage and comfort in our labours of spreading this gospel, I can recall nothing more suitable and efficacious than that noble exclamation of one of your own martyrs, 'Play the man, Master Ridley! we shall this day light such a candle, by God's grace, in England as I trust shall never be put out.'

THE MISSION OF LIBERAL PROTESTANTS AMONG CATHOLIC PEOPLES.

BY PROFESSOR JEAN REVILLE, D.D., PARIS.

ACCORDING to the request of the Council of these meetings, I wish to offer here a few general considerations on the mission of liberal Protestantism amidst the Roman Catholic peoples. I say *general* considerations, because it is quite impossible to fix exactly such a mission. The conditions in which Protestants may exercise their influence are very different according to the different countries or social classes. It is indeed a serious mistake to suppose that one may use the same method for the religious education of men of different races, of different instruction and of a different hereditary intellectual constitution. The relative failure of the Christian missions—I mean the immense disproportion we observe between the duties undertaken and the results obtained—proves how defective is this method.

Amidst people still tightly bound to the Roman Catholic faith, and whose spiritual thought is not yet developed, it is impossible to conduct any serious

liberal Protestant propaganda. They do not and cannot understand the questions involved, any more than you could teach algebra to some one who could not do a simple multiplication or division sum. You cannot imagine what strange ideas are prevalent about Protestants in certain countries where they are not known, and where priests, sincere but ignorant, teach the most stupendous legends about them. Protestant and atheist are there the same thing, and, according to the strict Catholic faith, all Protestants are considered as excommunicated—that is, condemned to damnation and to the eternal sufferings of hell.

In such a community a liberal Protestant may not hope to gain any souls to his free and enlightened religious faith. Those he speaks to can appreciate neither light nor liberty. He must concentrate his thought and zeal upon social emancipation or instructive enterprises, apart from religious organizations, diffusing historical and scientific knowledge that may prove the absurdity of the traditional Catholic teaching. He must try to change the intellectual condition of these men, and so prepare an appropriate ground where a free and conscious religious faith may later on grow and ripen. Protestantism can exert some influence only on Catholics already emancipated from the authority and faith of their own church, and we are taught by experience that in the countries where there is no powerful Protestant organization, the two most active agents of this emancipation are secular schools and

democracy. But it is not enough for a Catholic to emancipate himself from his own church to become a Protestant. In Catholic countries of advanced instruction and high civilization, there are a great number of these emancipated souls, especially amongst men. An important majority of them become Freethinkers as a natural consequence of their Catholic breeding. They were taught in their childhood that there is no other religion but Christianity, that Christianity and Catholicism are identical, that besides the Catholic Church no church has any right to call itself Christian. So when they arrive at the conviction that the Catholic doctrine and the authority of the Catholic Church are irreconcilable with the modern spirit and modern science, they naturally conclude that they are no longer Christians, and cannot profess any positive religion. Consequently they are ill-affected towards Protestantism, and do not even take pains to study it. Nevertheless, most of these Freethinkers are not irreligious men; most of them believe in God, and many of them in a future life. The best amongst them, for whom liberty has not degenerated into licence, cherish a moral ideal. Why, then, do such a small number become Protestants?

It is not only because the Protestant service, especially the Calvinist, seems to them too rigid, too unæsthetic, one might say too tedious; for they could adhere to a Protestant church without being constrained to a regular attendance at all its services.

It is chiefly because Protestantism seems to them an incomplete and somewhat misbegotten solution of the religious problem, because they feel displeased with its Biblicalism and dogmatism, because it appears often to them as a simple imitation of the Catholic Church devoid of its beauty and majesty. They say it is not worth the while, having shaken off the Papal yoke and the priest's servitude, to fall into passive obedience to a book, or to a group of theologians who show themselves as intolerant in their chapels as Catholics do in their cathedrals. It is amongst these men that liberal Protestantism has a double mission to accomplish, indirect by instruction, direct by diffusion of its faith—a free, tolerant, broad faith, independent of traditional dogma, but thoroughly imbued with the generous spirit of the Prophets and of the Gospel.

How often have I heard emancipated Catholics say after a religious service conducted by a liberal clergyman, such as at marriages and funerals, 'This is the religion that I can agree with!' Unhappily such impressions are often superficial. Many other considerations withhold them from giving their adherence to a Protestant church—material interests, family influences, especially the influence of women who are still bound to Catholicism. And when these impressions are more serious, when these men are desirous to know something more about Protestantism, they soon find out that most Protestants are orthodox, exceedingly divided, separated by sectarian ideas and rival creeds, which

are not at all edifying. Therefore why should they expose themselves to all the trouble and social annoyance caused by conversion to Protestantism in a Catholic country? They think it much better to remain where they are, retaining their individual convictions,—especially as the Catholic Church, in all countries where her authority is contested, is extremely accommodating about opinions as long as you do not renounce her exterior ceremonies in the most important circumstances of life.

Here we must exert our personal influence, and try to show that the only sure method to preserve themselves from Catholic influences in the future, and to secure spiritual liberty for themselves and for their families, is to join a liberal Protestant church, and to give to their children a liberal Protestant education, instead of leaving the children without religious instruction or with a Catholic instruction which they will be taught by their own parents to despise. But the mission of liberal Protestantism does not consist only in recruiting new members for the Unitarian—or, as we call them on the Continent, the Modern or Liberal churches. We must also, and in Catholic countries I should say we must chiefly, be the leaven in the social paste, seeking to inspire ever new instructive, educative and reformative movements, so as to summon people who are not Protestants to a high moral level, to spiritual life, to a holy passion for justice and truth, to the untrammelled love of God and of their brethren—that is, as Jesus said himself, to all that

is comprehended in the Law and the Prophets. The liberal Protestant must be not only a man of a chapel ; he must be a man of the Spirit. Like our Saviour, we must sow boldly and plenteously. The Lord Almighty will allow the seed to grow and the harvest to ripen, for liberal Protestantism is the real religion of the modern age. There are already in the world many Unitarians who are not members of any Unitarian church, and there will be many more as the years pass by.

THE PROTESTANT SCHOOLS OF DIVINITY IN FRANCE.

BY PROFESSOR G. BONET-MAURY, D.D., PARIS.

MY colleague, Professor Jean Réville, spoke to you about the urgent need of an inner mission amidst our Roman Catholic people in France, and pointed out the special message which we, liberal Protestants, have for them. Perhaps these questions occurred to your mind, while you were listening to his address : ' Whence will the men for that work be taken ? ' and ' Where can able preachers for that mission be trained ? ' I should like to answer both questions in a few words.

The answer to the first is easy to give. The best men to deliver the Protestant message to Roman Catholics are Roman Catholic laymen, or even priests, who have become earnest and learned liberal Protestants.

The first reason is because they know from their own, and generally bitter, experience the way which leads from the land of servitude to the sacred and joyous freedom of conscience. Were not the leaders of the Reformation monks such as Luther

and Vermigli, or priests like Calvin and Zwingli? Another reason is that they will speak a language more intelligible to their former co-religionists. About twelve years ago a most significant movement began among the Roman Catholic clergymen, carrying scores of the best men out of the Church of Rome, since they could no longer endure the yoke of infallible Popery. Since that time twelve priests or monks come every year to the Montauban, or the Paris Faculty of Theology, asking for advice, begging to be admitted as students; and some of them have become most capable and liberal preachers of the Gospel.¹

And now let us come to the second question: Where would these agents of the inner mission be trained? I answer, in our Protestant Schools of Divinity.

The Huguenots, our forefathers, laid much stress on their colleges and academies. The first of all was established at Geneva by John Calvin. You know his word to some churches of the Sain-tonge asking for ministers, 'Send us wood, and we shall send you back arrows.' Since they had secured the recognition of their public worship and self-government by Henry IV.'s Edict of Nantes, they established scores of colleges and no less than six academies or universities, especially for the training of their ministers, at Montauban, Saumur,

¹ For further information see *Le Chrétien Français*, a weekly newspaper, edited by Rev. A. Bourrier, No. 13, rue Brancas, a Sèvres (Seine et Oise).

Sedan, Die, Montpellier, and Orthez. Of these Schools of Divinity, only two—Geneva and Montauban—survived the abolition of Protestant worship by Louis XIV. Another was quite recently established at Paris, in 1877, to replace that of Strasburg, of which we had been deprived by the conquest of Alsace. It is noteworthy that our Schools of Divinity are supported by the French Republic, whilst the old Sorbonne and the four other Roman Catholic Faculties of Theology have been abolished. Moreover, the Geneva school, although belonging to Switzerland, undertakes the training of the future ministers of the Protestant congregations of France.

As to their relation to dogma, it is remarkable that only one of the Faculties was willing to subscribe to the orthodox Creed of the Synod of 1872; neither the Geneva nor the Paris Faculty would place themselves under the yoke of any Confession of Faith.

Here are some figures, in order to give you an idea of the importance of these schools. Geneva has six lectureships of Divinity, besides five or six lectureships of Philosophy, with fifty students. The majority of the professors are non-subscribers, or liberals. This school, which has endowments from the old Huguenots, gives scholarships even to students of our Faculty of Paris, to enable them to go to Germany in order to complete their theological studies. Montauban has six lectureships of Divinity, besides four lectureships of Philology and

Philosophy, and about seventy-five students, belonging for the most part to 'orthodox' communities. It will celebrate on June 4th next the Tercentenary of its foundation. Paris has ten lectureships, seven ordinary professors, and three so-called *Maîtres de Conférences*, with about sixty-five students. The half of the professors are Lutheran, the other half Presbyterian. The majority has a liberal bent. This result is chiefly due to the influence of our late dean, Auguste Sabatier. Educated in the strictest orthodoxy, he had come out nearly an Unitarian, by his effort to reconcile perfect liberty in Biblical researches with faithfulness to the apostolic Gospel. His conception of the dogmas as dissolving and revolving symbols of the Christian faith has been expounded in a masterly manner in his *Sketch of a Philosophy of Religion*.

Sabatier was not only a prominent divine, but a brilliant literary writer and a godly and good man. As Dean he succeeded in making with all of us professors at the Paris Faculty, most diverse in our views, a family of brethren, devoted to the same object—the service of Christ in mankind. Although dead, he still speaks to us. We will keep to his principle, which was to train our students in reverence to God and His prophets, but to observe perfect freedom in dealing with the letter of the Bible.

I cannot better explain to you the method of our liberal professors than by borrowing from R. L. Stevenson the following words :—

‘As honest men, whatever we teach, be it good or evil, it is not the literal doctrine of Christ. What he taught was not a code of rules, but a ruling Spirit; not truths, but a spirit of truth; not views, but a view. What he showed us was an attitude of mind.’

Now that is exactly what we try to make of our students: men imbued not with dogmatic formulæ, but with Christ’s spirit, and devoted to the progress of the Kingdom of God upon earth.

THE STRUGGLE AGAINST CATHOLICISM IN BELGIUM.

BY THE REV. JAMES HOCART, BRUSSELS.

IN order to present as complete a view of my subject as is consistent with the limits of this short paper, I must state that the struggle against Catholicism is waged in Belgium on three distinct lines : Political, philosophical, and religious.

I. The struggle is bound to be first of all political. The Catholic theory claims the subjection of the State to the doctrines and laws of the Church, the State being considered, to use the language of the Vatican Council, as having 'no stricter obligation and no more glorious mission than to uphold by all the means in its possession the Church, that pillar of the truth.' In a predominantly Catholic country, the ambition of the clergy tends, therefore, necessarily to the establishment of a purely Catholic Government. And such has been from the first, and is now the aim of the Belgian clergy. There is no doubt that its ardent participation in the Revolution of 1830 was chiefly inspired by opposition to the Protestantism of the House of Orange, and

by dread of the possible influence of Dutch Protestant thought upon Belgium. In the first fervour of the Revolutionary movement the Constitution of the new State was framed in the most liberal spirit ; and the Catholic party has never made any attempt towards the repeal of the Constitutional liberties—such an attempt would be violently resisted by numbers of moderate or nominal Catholics. Still these liberties, especially since their condemnation by Pius IX. in his Encyclical and Syllabus of 1864, are looked upon by zealous and believing Catholics as evils—necessary evils, however—which have to be tolerated for the present on account of the degeneracy of the times.

Though acknowledging that their ideal of a Catholic State and nation is actually out of their reach, the clergy hope and work for its realization in the future, and the means on which they rely is the control of the education of the rising generation. Therefore, the teaching of religion, *i.e.*, as things stand in Belgium, of Catholicism, in public schools has become the great subject of contention between the Catholics and their opponents of the Liberal, Radical, and Socialist parties. 'Let religion be taught in the Church and in the family,' say the non-Catholics, 'and let the public school be neutral.' The effort of the Liberal party to carry out this programme by their law of 1879 was evidently in advance of public opinion, and became one of the chief causes of their overthrow in 1884. Since then the Catholics have been constantly in office,

and by successive laws have made the teaching of religion by the clergy obligatory in all primary, secondary, and normal schools. The parents who desire to exempt their children from the religious lesson must tender their request according to a fixed formulary ; and it can be easily understood that parents who are in a dependent position feel obliged to allow their children to attend the religious class against their will rather than draw attention publicly to their dissent from Catholicism. The law also provides that private schools, entirely directed by Catholics and by members of religious orders, may be adopted and subsidized by the Communal authorities. It is clear, therefore, that in the struggle with regard to the teaching of religion in public schools, Catholicism has had the best of it from 1884 up to the present date.

II. The struggle against Catholicism from a philosophical standpoint cannot be said to be very effective at present—social rather than philosophical questions being in the foreground—nor are its results such as to recommend themselves to the mind of the liberal Christian. This philosophical struggle is carried on in three ways : by University teaching, by Freemasonry, and by Freethinking societies. Of the four Belgian Universities, those of Ghent and of Liège are under State control ; those of Brussels and of Louvain are independent. There is besides in Brussels an institution called the New University, though it is not properly a University, but rather a school for the higher study of

certain branches of science. The professors at Ghent and Liège are appointed by the Government, and I am told that their philosophical teaching is very circumspect ; they are careful not to clash with Catholicism. In Louvain, of course, all the professors are supposed to be docile sons of the Church, though I once met with a doctor who as a man held materialistic views, and as a candidate to a professorship at Louvain was an ardent defender of the faith. But naturally, whatever they may think *in petto*, the professors cannot publicly be anything but Catholics. It is therefore only at the University of Brussels, and at what is called the New University, that for the time being there exists a possibility of philosophical teaching which is not Catholic. At the former, for many years the venerable Mr. Tiberghien taught Krause's Panentheistical system ; but his successors incline to Positivism, and some of the younger professors of science are decidedly materialistic. At the latter institution the teaching is entirely Positivist.

In the Freemason lodges, which are distinctly anti-Catholic, and of which there are nineteen in the country, I am informed that the members who still adhere to Theism are a decreasing minority ; positivism and materialism are in the ascendant. The same may be said of the Freethinking societies, of which there are a certain number, particularly in large towns. 'Freethinker' in Belgium is generally synonymous with materialist. The activity of these societies by lectures and publications is

not very great at present. One of their principal modes of protestation is the refusal to accept the ministry of the priests at the funerals of their members.

It is much to be regretted that the reaction against Catholicism should carry so many of those who break away from the Church to the extremes of positivism and materialism. By its mediæval dogmas and its base superstitions, Romanism is responsible for this excessive rebound. But on the other hand this very excess becomes a help to the Church. The clergy constantly point to the fact as a proof that there is no other alternative to Catholicism but infidelity; and many of their people who are dissatisfied with much that they see and hear draw the same conclusion. Better be content with what we have, than be without religion altogether. And therein consists the weakness of philosophy as an opponent of Catholicism in Belgium.

III. It has been the business of others to endeavour to prove that the choice does not lie only between Romanism and Materialism. This brings us to the religious struggle against Catholicism, which is at the same time a struggle against irreligion. During the last sixty years a great deal of zealous and devoted work has been accomplished in that direction.

Omitting a few Plymouth Brethren, Salvationists, Spiritualists and Theosophists, the chief labourers in this field are the two orthodox organizations called the Union of Evangelical

Churches and the Belgian Christian Missionary Church. The first numbers sixteen churches and ten mission stations, with nineteen pastors and eight evangelists; the total of Church members is not given. The second is the more important. It numbers thirty-four churches and eighty mission stations, thirty-five pastors and three evangelists, 5,993 adult members, and 3,280 children. During the last ten years the increase in the number of churches has been six, and in the number of adult members 1,076, or 107 a year. The work is done almost exclusively in the Walloon or French-speaking provinces and among the industrial population. In the Flemish part no success to speak of has been obtained. Contrary to what took place in the sixteenth century, the Flemish population is very much more priest-ridden and hostile to Protestantism than the Walloon people.

I have said that orthodox Protestantism is recruited from the working classes. As a rule, the more cultured people are inaccessible to the orthodox theology. Therefore, such men as Edgar Quinet in 1858, Emile de Laveleye and Count Goblet d'Alviella twenty years later, thought that perhaps Liberal Christianity would have a better chance with the educated; and as a certain number of gentlemen showed willingness to make the attempt, the writer of this paper having, through a change of views, resigned a Methodist pulpit, decided in 1881 to devote his strength to the venture. Something has been achieved: a small

church has been established in Brussels with eighty-eight adult members, and a second group of some forty people has been formed at Ghent. Liberal Christianity has become widely known, it has gained public respect and obtained legal recognition. But it would be no use denying that we had anticipated far greater results, and had hoped to gather much larger numbers around the standard of Unitarianism. We have been met by great and manifold difficulties—the difficulty of finding suitable halls for our services, financial difficulties, legal difficulties and lawsuits, and, above all, moral and spiritual difficulties.

One of the chief of these last is a too frequent lack of character and courage. Among those who are estranged from Catholicism and adhere to theistical beliefs, many have signified privately their sympathy with our undertaking, but have kept aloof from fear of the great social and political power of the Church. They have counted the cost of a public profession of Liberal Christianity, and have considered it too heavy.

This means, of course, that their religious beliefs and aspirations are weak ; that in their hearts there is little faith and more indifference to the higher life. And to complete the picture, I must say that widespread indifference is one of the greatest obstacles to any religious progress in the country. On one side we have the faithful and devout Catholics, on the other the determined and outspoken dissenters from Catholicism, Freethinkers and

others. And between the two a mass of people who are indifferent to any philosophical opinion or religious belief whatever, and who care only for money, or position, or pleasure. Much of this indifference is inside the Church : numbers take too little interest in religion to dream of separating from the Church when so much is to be gained by keeping up an apparent and nominal connection with it. It is very hard to make a breach in this stolid indifference. It is like an earthen parapet into which all shots sink without taking effect.

From all these causes Protestantism has not yet made much head-way in Belgium. A few thousand Protestants of various denominations are but a small minority in a population of six million souls.

I do not perceive any marked symptoms of a progressive religious spirit in Catholicism itself. While in France hundreds of priests have left the Church from conscientious motives during recent years, in Belgium the case of the eminent geologist, Professor Renard, who lately renounced the priesthood, is a solitary exception. There is no more talk of Liberal Catholicism. The progressive members of the Catholic Church have thrown themselves into the social movement, and found an outlet for their activity in Christian democracy. In the meantime, convents are increasing in numbers and in wealth. In the part of Brussels which I inhabit, and within a short distance, I have seen recently several large and substantial conventual buildings erected. Materialistic and superstitious devotions like those of

St. Joseph, of St. Anthony, of the little Jesus of Prague, are flourishing and bringing money in. Making every allowance for examples of real piety, I must say that spiritual religion is at a very low ebb in the Church.

The position of Protestant workers in Belgium is neither easy nor agreeable, confronted as they are by a powerful and superstitious Church, by positivism, materialism, and indifference. What is their little band against such tremendous hostile forces? But maintaining their faith in God and in man, they still hope for an awakening in Belgium of the deeper needs of the soul; and they toil on patiently, satisfied if they may be honourably counted among those who, by preaching in the wilderness, prepare the way for the future advent of the living Christ.

THREE CENTURIES AFTER CALVIN :

LIBERAL PROTESTANTISM IN SWITZERLAND AT THE
BEGINNING OF THE TWENTIETH CENTURY.

BY PROFESSOR EDOUARD MONTET, D.D.,

Dean of the Faculty of Theology, Geneva.

I N German Switzerland, Zwingli, by his broad views on the subject of religion, had been to a certain extent the precursor of liberal Protestantism. In French Switzerland, on the contrary, Calvin, whose vigorous faith and religious genius had constituted Geneva the centre for the propaganda of the Reformation in French-speaking countries, had stamped this Reformation with a decisive character of dogmatic narrowness and ecclesiastical intolerance. Castelléon, who was compelled during Calvin's lifetime to quit Geneva, was the most illustrious champion, at this period, of the enfranchisement of religious thought from the yoke of Tradition.

Since those memorable times, the liberal religious movement has gone on and asserted itself, in the course of the history of the Swiss Protestant Churches, with ever varying fate accord-

ing to circumstances, occasions, and localities; but whatever has been its fate, at no time has the current which has borne Religion towards that complete spiritual liberty enjoyed by us to-day, ceased to make itself felt. It is quite manifest, however, that the liberal spirit in the domain of faith and of the church, has really only blossomed out in the course of the nineteenth century.

Let us rapidly examine at the dawn of the twentieth century, that is to say, more than three centuries after Calvin, the position of liberal Protestantism in Switzerland, and let us briefly draw up, as it were, a balance-sheet of the religious progress achieved in this country for a century.

To Zürich must be ascribed the honour, in German Switzerland, of having held aloft the standard of religious liberalism. The part played by Zürich from this point of view dates from Dr. Strauss's settlement in this city in 1839. If Dr. Strauss, whilst opening the way to liberal Protestantism, accomplished, on the whole, nothing but a negative and destructive work, Biedermann, starting likewise from the principles of the Hegelian Philosophy, became the creator of a new dogmatic. The journal which, at this period, stoutly combated, in the ecclesiastical field, the system of confessions of faith, had for its title 'Die Kirche der Gegenwart' (The Church of the Present).

Between orthodoxy and liberalism there arose an intermediate party, whose views were expounded in the '*Kirchenblatt*' ('The Church Times'): this conciliatory party, with its broad tendencies, had for its chief representative the theologian Hagenbach.

After a lull lasting for a few years, the struggle between the two elements, liberal and conservative, in the Protestant Churches of German Switzerland, was begun again by the liberal dogmatist, Lang. The Faculty of Theology at Berne was at this time the stronghold of the new school. The influence exerted by the Left became henceforth preponderating; it achieved the liberalization of the ecclesiastical laws in the various cantons (1870—1874). The party of conciliation was not slow to enter upon the same path, and likewise rejected all compulsory confession of faith.

In the last quarter of the nineteenth century we find, in German Switzerland, side by side with the Right, who maintain uncompromisingly the principle of confessions of faith as affording the indispensable basis for every church, the Left (*Die Reformen*) represented successively by the '*Zeitstimmen*' ('The Voices of the Times'), and the '*Schweizerisches Protestantenblatt*' (the '*Swiss Protestant Journal*'), and the Centre (*Die Vermittler*), the Conciliators, with its organ, the '*Kirchenblatt*' ('The Church Times').

At the opening of the twentieth century, we

learn that these three tendencies continue to exist, but that the differences which distinguish them are much less clearly marked than they were twenty-five years ago. Party spirit has yielded to the liberal religious spirit, which tends to penetrate more and more completely the groups which at one time remained more or less strangers to its influence.

At the present moment, liberal Protestantism is brilliantly represented, as regards theological teaching, at the Universities of Zürich and Berne. Pre-eminent in connection with philanthropic and moral institutions is the name of Pastor Bion of Zürich, the founder of the society of the 'Sisters of the Red Cross,' an association devoid of any sectarian character, whose members labour in the hospitals at Zürich, Winterthur, and St. Gall. Pastor Bion has collected for this association, which was established in 1882, and also for the institutions dependent upon it, the considerable sum of 800,000 francs (£32,000). Liberal Protestantism in German Switzerland has also rendered signal service in battling with intemperance and other social evils.

It remains for us to draw attention to two points in especial, in the liberal religious movement of this part of Switzerland, which is by far the most considerable in its area and in the number of the Protestants.

In the first place, and above all, must be mentioned the foundation in 1870 of 'The Swiss

Union of Liberal Christianity,' an extensive association with ramifications in most of the Protestant cantons—in Bâle, Berne, Aargau, Soleure, Appenzell, St. Gall, Zürich, and Geneva—and which is assuredly one of the great forces of Protestant liberalism in Switzerland.

Then, in the second place, must be mentioned the creation in 1884 of 'The General Society of Protestant Missions,' whose present headquarters are at Berlin, but in whose foundation Swiss liberal Protestantism played a prominent part. This society has striven to establish missionary enterprise on liberal lines, inculcating respect for the religions of non-Christian peoples, and spiritualizing the elements of truth which they contain. So far this society supports missionaries only in China and Japan.

In the three different cantons of French Switzerland the course of the liberal religious movement has varied greatly. Neuchâtel holds the place of honour in the battles waged in this part of Switzerland in support of the claims of spiritual liberty. In 1869 a group of enlightened laymen, under the leadership of Professor F. Buisson, entered upon an ever memorable contest with Orthodoxy at Neuchâtel, hitherto the undisputed mistress of the National Church in this canton. Professor F. Buisson represented the most advanced type of religious liberalism. The result of this campaign was the adoption of a new ecclesiastical law securing for ministers of religion

in matters of faith explicit liberty of conscience. A reaction set in against this liberal movement with a pertinacity only equalled by the rapidity of its propagation, and an independent church took shape which maintained with a firm hand the banner of orthodoxy. If, since that occasion, broader views in regard to religion have made any progress in the canton of Neuchâtel, it must be admitted that they have not been openly professed except in the case of a few individuals, and these have not succeeded in establishing any important or compact group of adherents.

The Canton Vaud, which had the honour of being the birthplace of Vinet, seemed destined, with the aid of a theologian so eminent, to enter deliberately on the path of religious liberalism. Had not Vinet, in fact, said that 'a Protestant, taking that word in its widest acceptance, is a man who investigates before he submits?' Could anything more aptly define religious liberalism than these noteworthy words? Yet it was with the Canton Vaud as it was with Vinet himself. Owing to temperament, owing to a moderation which led to the importation of the Reformation of the sixteenth century from Berne, instead of its spontaneous production from the soil, this canton, whatever influence may have been exerted there later on by the spirit of religious liberty, always as a matter of fact remained separated from the liberal churches of the rest of Switzerland.

When, in 1837, Vinet was elected Professor

at the Faculty of Theology in Lausanne, he combated boldly certain weak points in the preaching of the Evangelical Revival. When, however, in 1839, the great Council of Vaud abolished the obligation hitherto required of signing the Helvetic Confession, Vinet pronounced against this intermeddling of the civil authority in the domain of faith. But when, in 1847, after the famous resignation of a number of clergy, brought about by a new political measure of the Government, the question arose of the organization of the new church, which was to be untrammelled by State control, Vinet proposed a Confession of Faith of such breadth, for its underlying principle, as to shock more than one member of the new community. Vinet was an individualist, in the fullest sense of the word, and this subjectivism might have carried him a good deal further ; but his surroundings and the moderation of his own temperament did not allow him to break away from orthodoxy. Vinet remained in an orthodox church, although, in fact, he no longer belonged to the doctrines of orthodoxy either by mental affinity or by conviction.

Speaking generally, Protestantism in Canton Vaud has pursued the same line of conduct as Vinet himself. When, in 1869, F. Buisson, A. Réville, and others came to speak in Lausanne, people were eager to go and hear these distinguished orators, these innovators of world-wide reputation ; but their persuasive eloquence produced apparently no decided movement in the direction of liberal religion.

Since that time, however, great progress has been made, and it is certain that broadened views on religion have sunk deep into the different sections of the Church of Vaud. We need no other proof of this than the scientific method pursued and honoured in the teaching of theology at Lausanne, whether it be in the National Faculty or the Free Faculty of Theology. But, if it were desired to characterize by a single word the religious tendency of the Canton Vaud, at the present time, in respect to its doctrinal position, we do not think we should be doing any injustice to this canton in attributing to it a certain crypto-liberalism rather than any *bona-fide* liberal Christianity.

Entirely different has been the trend of religious ideas in the Canton of Geneva.¹ We must recollect that in this canton, we are dealing with a people imbued in the highest degree with the spirit of originality and enterprise. A Bishop of Geneva once said, speaking of this people : '*Gens semper appetens aliquid novi.*' At the commencement of the nineteenth century, the old type of Liberalism still held sway in the Church of Geneva,—a type which professed in things doctrinal, supernaturalism ; while rejecting in its ecclesiastical constitution any system of confessions of faith. This old-world, highly-respectable Liberalism has been not unjustly reproached with a certain lack of religious depth, and it was combated by the spirit of the Evangelical

¹ Professor Chantre has very kindly supplied me with numerous particulars for the purposes of this paper.

Revival of England and Scotland, on its importation into Europe at the time of the Restoration.

Politics were in those days closely connected with the religious life of the people of Geneva. The aristocracy, which had clean separated itself from the Evangelical Revival at its origin, sought later on, through its alarm at the chimerical dangers of religious liberalism, when exerted in the political sphere, to come into closer union, doctrinally, with the Free Churches of the Evangelical Revival ; and, as a consequence of this, since the middle of the nineteenth century, Orthodoxy has tended to assert itself as the dominant factor in the Church of Geneva. And so, when the new school of liberal thought attempted, in the person of A. Réville, in 1864, to spread abroad its views in Geneva, it met with a very poor reception.

Certain acts of intolerance committed at that time by the Orthodox majority, such as the refusal of Pastoral chairs to such men as A. Réville, Fontanès, and Pelissier, at length aroused the people of Geneva. When, therefore, in 1869, Professor Buisson delivered at Geneva the course of lectures which he had previously delivered at Neuchâtel, the liberal movement forthwith took a wholly fresh start. Professor Cougnard drew crowds to church by his eloquence ; whilst others (Pastor Chantre *e.g.*) organized the new party for the promotion of liberal religion. The journal entitled '*The Liberal Alliance*' was at this date the organ of religious liberalism. From 1870 onwards, Liberalism in Geneva has con-

tinued to make considerable strides. In 1871, the Consistory, elected by universal suffrage, was equally divided between the Liberals and the Orthodox party. Shortly afterwards, a by-election gave the Liberals a majority on this body. Finally, in 1875, the Orthodox party declined to vote, and as a consequence the Consistory had a mere minority of the Orthodox party, and these were elected by the Liberals themselves.

At about the same time, in 1874, the Great Council and the people of Geneva adopted a new ecclesiastical constitution of the most liberal character. 'Any minister,' it is therein enjoined, 'may preach and teach freely on his own responsibility ; nor may this liberty be restricted either by confessions of faith or by liturgical formularies.' This constitution, won after so many arduous struggles, is in force at the present time in the Church of Geneva. To the Liberal party is furthermore due a whole series of measures derived from the principle laid down in the constitution of 1874, and which bears eloquent witness to the depth of the liberal convictions on matters of Church government and doctrine of the men who directed this religious and distinctly modern movement. There was, first of all, the publication of a Liturgy which has been spoken of as 'Polychrome.' It contained, for the forms of worship, prayers and formularies of a varied doctrinal character (Orthodoxy and Liberalism being represented in their differing shades). The success of this Liturgy has been such, both in Geneva and elsewhere, in the

French-speaking churches, that several editions have already been exhausted.

Then, in the second place, the Church of Geneva has no official catechism, either for the use of communicants or for use in Sunday schools or for religious instruction in State schools. Everywhere the minister is in the enjoyment of complete religious freedom.

Since the date of the first promulgation of the liberal constitution of the Church of Geneva, religious liberalism has gone on ceaselessly developing ; but not without passing through phases of very diverse kinds. At the outset, Liberalism had asserted itself vigorously as an ecclesiastical party ; but now, for some years past, it has largely thrown off its party character, whilst, on the other hand, its doctrinal and ecclesiastical views have spread and deeply penetrated into those circles which had hitherto been attached to Orthodoxy.

The Faculty of Theology in Geneva presents a fair reflection of the changes which have been gradually introduced into the Church of Geneva. After having consisted for long of a majority of liberal Professors, and even at one time being entirely under the sway of Liberalism, it consists at the present time of three liberal Professors, of one Professor representative of the Centre, and two belonging to the Right. But, taken as a whole, this Faculty shows itself to be influenced by the liberal spirit in religion and doctrine.

A point of interest to be noted in the life of the

Church of Geneva, is seen in the development which religious instruction has received in its midst. This instruction, which is official indeed, but optional (parents being allowed full liberty in letting their children attend the course or not), is given in all the primary and secondary schools. Since 1888, a higher course of instruction, devoted to the study of the origin of Christianity, and likewise of the great non-Christian religions, has been introduced by the Consistory into the upper classes of the High Schools for boys and girls.¹ We must, in conclusion, add that religious liberalism in Geneva has largely contributed, in late years, to scatter broadcast a whole host of important religious publications, and every winter it has continued to invite eminent lecturers (A. Sabatier, A. Réville, J. Réville, Chapuis, Buisson, etc.), who have drawn large and cultured audiences. And it is noteworthy, that prominent amongst these were representatives of the differing sections of the Orthodox body. It was at one of these courses that the late lamented Dean A. Sabatier gave an outline for the first time of his 'Sketch of a Philosophy of Religion,' which he published in 1897.

And now, to sum up and draw to a close this all too brief and hurried survey. We find, then, at the outset of the twentieth century, and noticeable alike in French-speaking and German-speaking Switzerland, the beneficial and active influence exerted by the liberal religious movement, and we record the solid progress that it has achieved. It has not

¹ This instruction has been entrusted to Professor Montet.—ED.

escaped observation, that in recent years the liberal movement, considered in its ecclesiastical character, has lost ground (in spite of having won the victory on the battle-ground of the religious constitutions), but it none the less exerts its ascendancy, effectually and palpably, in the ranks of the new orthodoxy ; that is to say, of an orthodoxy stripped of its intolerance and original narrowness. Such a result we are persuaded, gives us ample ground for rejoicing. What, after all, does it matter whether we as individuals or as parties further the work, if only our ideas become triumphant ! Thank God, who has bestowed so vigorous and fertile a life upon that religious Truth which we have drawn from the Bible, and which we evermore proclaim !

PRESENT DAY RELIGIOUS PROBLEMS IN HUNGARY.

BY PROFESSOR GEORGE BOROS, D.D., KOLOZSVAR.

IN Hungary, religious and political systems were originally rooted in the fertile soil of liberty. The continuous history of one thousand years testifies that in this country nothing can have long life which is contrary to liberty. Before the great Church was split into eastern and western branches, just at the beginning of the eleventh century, Hungary's king received a crown from the Roman bishop, the Pope; and in acknowledgment accepted the Roman form of Christianity, though the Magyar race had 'a natural tendency towards the more rational Eastern religious thinking.' Several kings were adorned with the title 'Saint,' in acknowledgment of their services to Rome; but none after the Reformation. Hungary was a fertile ground for the most rational kind of reform. Unitarianism was not only accepted, but has been maintained ever since. Catholicism so completely lost supremacy in Transylvania, that for nearly two hundred years she had no regular bishop there.



Prof. GEORGE BOROS, D.D.

Great changes in politics caused a transformation in the Church. The long roll of native kings ceased, and the Habsburg dynasty which gained the throne was always most zealously Catholic, and secured all possible advantages for that Church. Protestantism suffered tremendous losses ; but the purely Magyar population never deserted Protestant liberalism, and as soon as liberal thought, from France and Germany, entered the field, a reawakening began which will never be stopped again. The first half of the nineteenth century secured liberty in politics and in literature ; and, as a natural result of these two, Unitarianism in 1848 was acknowledged as a State religion for the whole of Hungary, having equal rights with the Roman Catholic and Protestant Churches. The second half of the nineteenth century shows a very attractive picture of progress in education and in science, as well as in religious reform. This movement was crowned in 1896 by the Bill of Religious Freedom, which secured freedom and tolerance for every religious sect, and even for those who do not wish to belong to churches of any kind.

The spirit of liberty and the acknowledged power of State legislation were most conspicuously manifested in 1897 in the Civil Marriage Law. The Roman Catholic Church was most seriously affected. The usage of nine hundred years, and all the influence attending it, were at once taken out of her hands. No wonder that she has taken up the defensive position, opening a strong and fearless

fight all along the line. This reactionary movement is led by the higher priesthood and by some of the richest families of the country. They gain considerable support from Austria and also from Rome.

When the Civil Marriage Law was passed, the Government was in the strong hands of a Protestant Prime Minister ; but still the reactionary party succeeded in placing a rich young Count in the Transylvanian Roman Catholic Episcopal Chair. This was very important, because Transylvania has always been the stronghold of religious freedom, and now the new leader carries on his work with the intention to gather all the lost sheep back to the Church. The clergy are, indeed, more active than ever. Jesuits now find their way to places where four or five different denominations were living a most peaceful life together. The result, however, is not equivalent to the energy exerted. Their influence hardly reaches beyond the circle of sensitive womanhood.

The most encouraging feature is that the State authorities continue their work in strengthening liberal tendencies. Protestant ministers, who used to be very poorly paid, now receive considerable aid and support from the State's treasury.

It may seem curious that, in discussing a religious subject, we are dealing with political and ecclesiastical questions ; but here and now the foremost question is still the consolidation of a national Magyar State. We have not yet surmounted the

questions of outward organization, and the smaller churches especially have to retire into their fortresses secured by law, and keep to their organic outer power. We are still always on the defensive. This, however, does not mean that there is stagnation here in the domain of ideas. Quite the contrary. Religious thought is in a high tide of liberalism. Even the common people, who are out of the direct influence of the orthodox churches, are inclined to rationalism. There is not the slightest doubt about it, that a great multitude of people all over the country want new and sound religious ideas. They want a modern form of Christianity, and it is quite a mistake to believe that the higher priesthood will attain to any great result with its most recent attempts to carry religion into politics, and force the ecclesiastical symbols of Romanism into the educational institutions.

Along with this, one would like to see a vigorous reawakening and activity on the side of liberal Protestantism. There is some activity among orthodox communities, but it does not touch the heart of the people. Theirs is not the gospel wanted, because they are trying to put new wine into old bottles. They seem to be of opinion that old conceptions about the chief subjects of faith can be saved. They forget that people are now accustomed to straightforward speech in all departments of life. They leave out of consideration the fact, that people now look at things with their own eyes, and judge with their own mind ; therefore, they will not accept

even religious ideas, if they are contradicted by the voice of their soul and the feeling of their heart.

If the teachings of religion were brought into harmony with the present-day general tide of thought ; if, instead of looking for outward authorities, teachers would persuade men that God secured to each one of us a soul able to understand His very word, and also that each man may approach God if he would be born anew, then, perhaps, a new birth in the religious life of the whole would be possible.

I am fully persuaded that a sincere liberalism, founded on the pure and inspiring teaching of Jesus, has a great and lasting future before it in this country. But it must be borne in mind, that a religion which is to be the religion of the Hungarian race must be simple, sober, and sweet, easily appreciated, must harmonize with the general straightforward character of the race, and be a friend to freedom—political as well as ecclesiastical. This ought to be a religion adapted to the age, with the central idea of the unity of God, unity of man, and unity of soul.

If any kind of Hungarian church leaves out of consideration the fact that a Hungarian mind wants to be in harmony with itself even in religion, and, instead of nourishing the idea of the divine unity, tries to implant into it either the Logos idea, which is of Greek origin, or the idea of a God-Mother, which is of pagan origin, it is working against the unity of the nation, and preparing the way for that danger which is already in sight in the absorbing

tendency on one side of the Germanic, on the other of the Slavonic races.

That such a solution of the difficulty by the institution of a rational faith is possible, the history of the last four centuries most convincingly proves. Only on this principle can the fact be explained that the belief in the divine unity no power could eradicate from the soul of the Hungarian or Székely people during four hundred years of persecution.

I am not going to say that that kind of religion which we call Unitarian, in its present form, is just the one which quite expresses all the ideas of the Magyar nation; but I do say that when a nation, like our own, has succeeded in solving the more difficult problems on democratic principles, the time is approaching when, in ecclesiastical and religious life also it shall be seen that the remains of middle-age *ecclesia militans* are out of date. They might have been very useful when all the world was living in the destructive spirit of war, but now when we hear everywhere the good tidings of 'Peace on earth and goodwill towards men,' they have lost their meaning, and, being quite contrary to the spirit of Jesus, must be given up—the sooner, the better. This grand change is already begun. Sure signs are seen here and there that out of the mustard seed shall grow a great tree.

THE LIBERAL MOVEMENT IN ITALY.

BY THE REV. TONY ANDRÉ, FLORENCE.

WHILE scientific religious studies, freed from the fetters of dogma, have—during the century just ended—made magnificent progress in Protestant countries, there are few questions which have been less in favour in Italy. Men are afraid of meddling with them, or do not conceive it possible to disturb what has been fixed by tradition. Not that independent minds have been entirely wanting : to affirm that would be to forget men like Mazzini, Aurelio Saffi, Terenzio Mamiani ; but these eminent men have constituted a very small minority, drowned, so to say, in the great mass, and hardly in touch with it at any point. I do not propose, however, to treat the subject historically, going back to the origin of the question ; I confine myself to our contemporaries and to what is being done in our own day.

I must say at the outset that it is difficult to speak of a 'movement' properly so-called, or at any rate the word must be taken in its most elastic sense ; and, as everything is relative, we must call

opinions '*liberal*' which would not seem very liberal in Northern lands, but for Italy constitute a real progress as compared with the current, and often terribly narrow, ideas.

I shall, however, point out to you several professors or authors of great worth, who do honour to their country, and are in perfect communion of thought with us. And if, on the other hand, I multiply names, it will be rather in order to win your interest and sympathy for some indications of progress that deserve encouragement. What matter if they are rich in promises for the future rather than productive at the present time! Everything must have a beginning; no one is better aware of this than you are.

And, as I should like to give a practical turn to these few pages, allow me also to point out to you what I believe to be the general causes—if not all the causes—of this torpor of religious thought.

I shall speak to you first of Liberalism in Protestant surroundings, afterwards of Liberalism among Catholics.

I.

It would seem that Protestants, being trained to religious liberty, should be, in Italy as elsewhere, the pioneers of progress. I have, unhappily, to state that they remain in the rear—in this sense: that though their starting-point was far in advance of Catholic views, they have not moved, they have

not advanced in freedom, they have not profited by the principles of their individualism. I am acquainted with only one single work conceived in a liberal spirit: I refer to the 'Manual of Religious History for Schools and Families,' published by Professor Ferdinando Bracciforti, a member of the Committee of this Council. It is a summary of the most beneficial lessons and the most edifying narratives of the Bible, without abstract dogmas and without legendary tales. The history is brought down to the official establishment of the Christian religion under Constantine. The fifth part, entitled 'The Other Religions,' teaches the scholars not to be exclusive, since the religious spirit has made itself felt everywhere, and on the other hand to appreciate Christianity more highly by understanding its great superiority.

If I have spoken of Signor Bracciforti's book as the only one, do not imagine that the Protestants publish nothing. On the contrary, they write a great deal, especially in the Waldenses Church. The Protestant printing-house at Florence, to name only one, issues religious works every year, for the most part of an edifying class, but including some theological and historical books. Among the latter, those of Professor Emilio Comba have an incontestable merit: Signor Comba is certainly among the authors of our day, the one who writes with most authority of all that concerns Waldenses history.

I cannot speak otherwise than with great sym-

pathy of the Waldenses Church, in whose ranks I count many friends. It is active, well organized, animated by excellent sentiments, and, of all the churches that are engaged in the evangelization of Italy, it is certainly the most interesting and the best qualified to make the Gospel respected; but it remains firmly attached to the ideas of our ancestors, and even to-day the ordination of ministers is preceded by a doctrinal examination. In addition to this examination, the Ordination Liturgy says: 'Thou dost promise faithfully to teach the pure evangelical doctrine, revealed in the Sacred Scriptures of the Old and of the New Covenant, professed by our forefathers and summed up in our Confession of Faith.' And further on: 'In consequence of thy request for ordination and the solemn promise thou hast just made, in consequence of thy examination in the faith and of thy certificates of study,' etc. . . . 'we now proceed to thy ordination.'

It is the same in the other Churches, which work, each on its own account, for the evangelization of Italy. It will be easily understood that they propagate orthodox ideas. The ministers who are in active work are sent into Italy by orthodox committees in foreign countries, especially by Scotch, English, and American committees, who naturally choose their men among those of whom they feel most sure from a dogmatic point of view. The congregation does not elect its own pastor, but accepts the one who is appointed. Only a few parishes, whose members succeed in defraying the expenses

of their worship themselves, have the minister of their choice.

Am I obliged to conclude that the Italian Protestants subscribe to the traditional ideas without being convinced of their truth? Far from that. The conditions under which they live keep them in this current of ideas. The members of the churches are drawn mainly from the lower middle classes (*la petite bourgeoisie*) and from the poor. I repel, as a gratuitous calumny, the accusation of certain clericals, who say that money is paid to attract recruits. If the charity of Protestants stretches out a helping hand to all the unfortunate, including Catholics, it has never degenerated into a traffic in souls. Nevertheless, the fact remains that the poor and people of small means form the majority of all the congregations. This implies that they are to a large extent composed of persons unaccustomed to intellectual discussion. The new converts have recognized the superiority of Protestantism, and have accepted it; but as they previously felt the need of the priest's direction, so after their conversion they still require an authority. The middle classes, on the other hand, are engrossed in business, which presents greater difficulties in Italy than in other countries; the economic conditions, though not so bad as is often stated, necessitate a constant struggle. Tradesmen earn little, schoolmasters still less; in all the other liberal professions competition is extremely keen; time and strength are absorbed by the question of daily bread. Where

are they to find leisure to reflect on abstract problems?

On the other hand, in spite of the ground that has been gained since the establishment of liberty of worship, Protestantism in Italy is still in its stage of reaction against Catholicism, and struggles for its existence as much as for its propagation, so that it is obliged, as I might almost say, to think more of its opponent than of itself. The sermons abound in controversy, and controversy leads the preachers to lay more and more stress, by way of contrast, on ecclesiastical doctrines, instead of emphasizing the moral and vital elements of religion.

There are, it is true, some small signs of emancipation, but they are so slight that it is scarcely worth while to speak of them. I must not forget, however, to mention that the Waldensian School of Theology, the only one which is of any account in Italy, and which gives a complete and thorough teaching, admits certain points well established by modern criticism, principally in questions relating to the Old Testament. Nevertheless, this school remains the stronghold of the older orthodoxy, for the maintenance of which it forms the best prepared ministers.

As to the Religious Press, if, leaving to each writer the responsibility of his own articles, it sometimes allows us to hear the clash of opinions, still it cannot accept what is contrary to its spirit. Why do we see so few theological discussions? Is it because the Orthodox have all the journals and all the reviews in their own hands? Or is it because

the language of the Liberals would not be understood? I incline to the latter explanation, for if the number of Liberal writers were sufficient, and if they were sure of finding readers, they would certainly find a way of making their voice heard.

The picture I have drawn of Italian Protestantism would be desperate, were we not convinced of the perfect good faith of both pastors and laity.

We find, however, more independence of thought in the Foreign Churches established in the Peninsula. This is explained by the fact that the pastors have studied at Universities where religious criticism is freely practised, while on the other hand their hearers all possess a considerable degree of culture. The great advantage of these churches is that, though they all consider themselves orthodox, they are in no way creed-bound. If I may be permitted here to speak of my own Church, I would first observe that its aim is to provide for the religious needs of all Protestants, whoever they are. Six nationalities are at present represented. Further, according to its Statutes, 'leaving it to God to read the hearts, it admits to its communion all who make a public profession of Christianity, and who desire to serve God, as He requires it, in spirit and in truth.' And if the Church showed its disapproval, in 1831 and 1834, of two pastors who developed too energetically the doctrine of Original Sin, and in 1862 of a preacher who expressed in the pulpit his doubts concerning the bodily resurrection of Christ, it has never asked its ministers for doctrinal engagements

or professions of faith ; more than that, though a Reformed Church by its constitution, it has welcomed Lutheran pastors. In a word, it has always interested itself in the moral and vivifying side of religion, caring little for dissertations on dogmas, and still less for controversy.

And what I say of my own Church may also be said, in varying degrees, of all those in which the service is conducted in a foreign language. A broad and tolerant spirit prevails ; but each language having, as a rule, only one place of worship in each town, and no administrative bond with Churches of the same language in other cities, there is no conflict, and consequently no motive for a Church to attach itself officially to one party rather than to another.

II.

If there is no Liberal Protestant movement, we must not expect to find much more among the Catholics.

In the countries of Northern Europe and in France the clergy occupy themselves with religious questions, following, at least at a distance, the progressive Protestants ; and, by their study, some of them emancipate themselves intellectually and spiritually. In Italy this impulse is lacking. The stimulus can only come from without, and in traversing the snowy summits of the Alps it is cooled down considerably. The result is that we must not seek among the Italian clergy for any

traces of a movement, properly so called, for theological reform. It is not impossible that, in the secrecy of the closet, some minds may be agitated by questions touching a whole range of opinions, or that critical examination may go beyond certain points of detail ; but nothing is manifest to the outside world except here and there petty acts of independence which do not commit any one much. There are, no doubt, a few priests who are bolder in their assertions, and these assertions might have far-reaching consequences ; but Rome watches, Rome is clear-sighted, and allows nothing to pass which goes beyond the semblance of liberty that she grants ; or if powerful influences have been brought into play to save a courageous pamphlet from the Index and from condemnation, Rome takes care that such a pamphlet shall be the first and the last, and its influence is lost by not being followed up.

Whatever may be the value of these modest manifestations, they must not be regarded as an approximation to Protestants. All Catholic writers who have had occasion to refer to the subject reject the suggestion, and I believe they are right. What they would desire to see is a progressive movement of the Catholic Church, effected by its own forces, entirely for its own profit. Instead of remaining Catholics tied to the ancient traditions and ancient modes of action, they would wish to become enlightened Catholics—that is all.

It might seem, at first sight, that a place set apart should be reserved for the Reformed Catholic

Church of Italy, founded by Count Enrico di Campello, ex-canon of the Basilica of St. Peter of the Vatican. It is a branch of Old Catholicism. Its centres are to be found at Arrone (near Terni), at Dovadola (near Forlì), at S. Angelo dei Lombardi (near Avellino), and at San Remo. A station was opened, a year and a half ago, at Rome itself. This movement, however, promising though it appeared at first, makes no progress; and quite recently there has been an important secession from its ranks. While Count di Campello was introducing the forms of Anglican Ritualism, the congregation at San Remo—or at any rate the greater part of it—has gone over to Protestantism, together with its minister, Signor Ugo Janni. The latter, the founder and editor of the *Labaro*, an independent journal advocating religious reform in Italy, deserves to arrest our attention for a few moments.

His desire is to work for the reconciliation of faith and science by separating clearly their respective fields of action, the task of faith being to direct the moral consciousness towards God and the invisible world which science is incapable of grasping, while science remains absolutely free to study matter, its properties and forces, and the laws that govern it. Nevertheless religion, enriched by the conclusions of science, should march hand in hand with progress, to bring about a profound, radical reform, a transformation of Christianity, which should not be a new religion, but should give Christians that which modern society needs—the

revelation of Revelation. In short, no irreligious and superficial rationalism, but the 'rationale obsequium' which does not mutilate man but respects all his marvellous energies, all his inalienable rights. Such are the aims of Ugo Janni, now a pastor of the Waldenses Church. If I speak of him here, it is because his secession from the Reformed Catholic Church only dates from this year, and it is impossible as yet to know the part he will play among his new co-religionists.

Another movement, very similar to Old Catholicism, is that of Dom Paolo Miraglia, at Piacenza. Miraglia, with his piercing eye and energetic features, reminded one somewhat of Savonarola, or recalled his memory by the boldness of his first declarations. He was already being greeted as the coming Reformer, about to revolutionize Italy, when his desire to be at the head of a personal movement, after separating him from the Old Catholics whose ideas were akin to his, threw him suddenly into a false path. On the 6th of May, 1900, he had himself consecrated Bishop of Piacenza by Monsignor Villatte. This step lost him the sympathy of many, and his profession of faith completed their disappointment. 'I, the undersigned,' so we read in it, 'declare and avow that I hold the Catholic faith intact, as it is prescribed and formulated in the Apostles', the Nicene, and the Athanasian Creeds, and I accept also all the Œcumenical Councils. . . . I will preserve intact the doctrine of the Council of Trent in all that concerns the definitions or explanations touching the Seven

Sacraments,' and so on. Add to this that a lawsuit, followed by a sentence desired by the clericals, has obliged Dom Miraglia to take refuge abroad. His reformatory movement, therefore, is now in suspense.

Let us pass on to the official clergy.

The religious question is singularly complicated by a very important circumstance: I refer to its connection with politics. King Victor Emmanuel, in establishing himself at Rome, the capital of the kingdom, placed many souls in a state of great embarrassment. A portion of the clergy still protest against the usurpation; the rest accept the new situation of the Pope, and, giving up all idea of a restoration of the temporal power, declare themselves sincerely devoted to their country. The former are called '*Clericals*,' the latter '*Liberals*.' When, therefore, one hears the Liberal clergy spoken of, one must think before all of the 'Roman question.' Still it is just in this section that we shall look also for independence of thought, for those of the clergy who do not work for the cause of the temporal power have little chance of being raised to high offices; they accordingly devote their attention to literature, to teaching, to the cure of souls, and their contact with the Socialist movement sometimes gives them an original turn.

In this respect the North of Italy, and especially Milan, are particularly interesting. At Milan, the Ambrosian ritual continues to give a peculiar stamp to religious life. The old clergy, who were trained in the school of Rosmini and took part in

the struggles for independence, do not submit blindly to all the pretensions of the Holy See. If they obey the religious authority in its own domain, they wish to be free to love their country and to exercise their rights as citizens. The younger clergy, it is true, are urged on to fanaticism by the clerical journals, but ideas have moved on, and there is no lack of priests who no longer believe in the efficacy of the 'Non expedit' of Papal policy.

P. Pietro Stoppani is an honourable representative of this Liberal tendency. 'When,' says he, 'the temporal power shall no more be spoken of in the Church, and the Vatican Court shall have ceased to exist; when the bishops and high dignitaries shall be chosen from among the most learned and most saintly ecclesiastics; when a greater independence shall be granted to study; and when complete liberty of thought and of civil action shall be accorded to citizens,—then the condition of the Church in Italy will improve. To-day it is discouraging; but it is evident that, by the force of events rather than by the will of man, a change for the better is being prepared.' Pietro Stoppani has proved the sincerity of his opinions. Last September, when commemorating King Humbert, he had the courage publicly to denounce the miserable opposition of the Vatican to the funeral of the murdered king and to Queen Margaret's prayer; he characterized this opposition as a 'Pharisaic malaria,' which infuriated the Clericals. I may add that Pietro Stoppani, who is the nephew of the famous geologist,

Antonio Stoppani, in studying religious questions vindicates the legitimate claims of history, of science, in a word, of reason, and combines with his independence of mind a truly Christian religious sentiment, which wins our personal sympathy.

It is at Milan too that 'Americanism' is in favour. Monsignor Ireland's ideas have been received with approval; I refer, of course, to his earlier ideas, for his later evolution has caused bitter disappointment; and Spalding's writings are likely to be substituted for his. The translation of his principal work is about to appear—if it has not already appeared—under the title of 'Opportunity,' and is likely to have a large number of readers.

Nevertheless, except for a few men like Stoppani, whose thought goes out beyond this limited horizon, the political and patriotic question is dominant. It was necessary to speak of it briefly. Unless the Vatican ceases to claim the temporal power and to combat the Italian Government, I am convinced that all that section of the clergy which is devoted to the king will become accustomed to look with less confidence to the Holy See, and the authority of the Pope, weakened in their eyes at one point, will lose something of its strength and its necessity in the domain of dogma and of theology. The claims of science only come into consideration in the second place.

But we will leave these considerations which lead to conjectures, always risky, about the future. On a much smaller scale, there is already at pre-

sent among the clergy a certain movement towards independence, which touches our subject more closely. It shows itself in desires for reform. And these aspirations for reform among the clergy have a double source: their origin is in some cases moral and social, in others scientific.

I will explain my meaning. Some of the clergy would wish to give religious life to their churches and to bring the indifferent back to the altar. They are tender-hearted ecclesiastics who follow the current of modern thought a little—but as little as possible—in order to attract modern souls, who lay less stress on certain dogmas for fear of giving offence to waverers, who take an interest in social questions and in the working classes, with the secret hope of curbing them with the bonds of the church,—in short, they are ecclesiastics whom the cure of souls has in some slight degree emancipated from scholasticism and dry dogmatism. Several of them are also moved to activity by the wish not to leave all philanthropic and social work in the hands of the Protestants.

Among these men, without attempting to classify shades of opinion, I may name Bishop Bonomelli, of Milan, who goes among the working men in order to combat socialism, and a young priest of Rome, Romolo Murri, editor of the '*Cultura Sociale*.' Romolo Murri has written several pamphlets for the people, and aims at a Christian State, in which the Church, though exercising its influence everywhere, should have no temporal power.

Father Giovanni Semeria, a Barnabite, insists on the necessity of religious life. He says that a man may accept the whole series of dogmas without having the slightest doubt about them, and yet not be a Christian: true Christianity must be lived.¹ And he is not alone in proclaiming the insufficiency of a purely external religion. Cardinal Capecelatro, in his volume on 'The Christian Virtues,' takes up the same position.

The same Semeria, in a lecture delivered at Milan, deplored the ignorance prevailing among Italian Catholics, and did not hesitate to advise his co-religionists to go to Germany and England to study. He himself, in his discourses, quotes German and English authors, even Protestants, among others Harnack, whom he praises without stint. It is only fair to add that he quotes with approval the page in which the Berlin Professor points out the inability of science to solve the great problems of life.

The Bible seems to be marked out as the principal subject of study. An anonymous writer ('Della lettura in famiglia del Santo Vangelo di N. S. Gesù Cristo, per un sacerdote cattolico italiano,' Torino, Unione tip. editrice), after showing the use that was made of the sacred books in antiquity, points out that their neglect places Catholics in a position of real inferiority as compared with Protestants, and pleads for a return

¹ Gente che torna, gente che si muove, gente che s'avvia, p. 29.

to the ancient custom. But if such an effort is not to arouse suspicion, and is to meet with any success, the initiative must come from above, from the Pope himself. The pamphlet was quickly suppressed. Nevertheless, Cardinal Capececiattolo wrote the preface, in the form of a letter, to an Italian translation of the Gospels of which we shall speak further on, and he ventured to praise the undertaking.

I may also mention the names of Luigi Arosio, Catena, Ghignoni, Giovannozzi, Jader Bertini, Pietrobuono, Pistelli, Rusconi, Vitali. This list might be lengthened, but it would really serve no purpose.

The second class of prudently independent ecclesiastics comprises those who interest themselves in the progress of science. They are often men of culture, they study foreign authors and do not disdain Protestant writers. The Abbé Antonio Rosmini, who died in 1855, was the founder of a school. In Milan there is still a group of priests who follow the master's method, and endeavour to bring men of science back to religion, and Catholics back to science. Their leading representative is Padre Morando, a cultured and honourable man. The Rosminians frequently meet together for discussion, but, being harassed and persecuted, they are no longer able to play an important part; and though they have a printing-office of their own, they write little. To give an idea of the annoyances to which men of any independence of thought are exposed, it will suffice to mention, as one instance

among many, what happened three years ago to Father Giovanni Genocchi. Cardinal Parocchi had appointed Genocchi professor of the Sacred Scriptures at the Roman Seminary. The new professor at once manifested a certain freedom in his manner of teaching, with the result that after one year he was turned out of his office, and, to prevent complaints, the chair was abolished. There was then a Catholic Biblical Society at Rome, in which questions concerning the Sacred Books were studied by ecclesiastics. But 'study' is scarcely the appropriate word. Genocchi, who was a member of the society, thought he might venture to lay before his colleagues the ideas of Father Lefrange on the 'Sources of the Pentateuch,' as put forth in a paper read by the latter at the Catholic Congress at Fribourg in 1897. This simple exposition, which was not a very alarming one, so scandalized these good Roman priests that they dismissed Genocchi from their society. Soon after, in order to prevent the repetition of similar scandals, they dissolved the society itself.

About this time, the Abbé Adriani, who presided over the first Subalpine Historical Congress held at Cuneo on the occasion of the seventh centenary of that town, declared that science nourishes in the minds of all who cultivate it one single desire, 'that of finding truth, wheresoever it may be found, and whoever its opponents may be.' (*Arch. Storico Ital.* disp. 3, anno 1898.)

Salvatore Minocchi, a young doctor of divinity

and an accomplished scholar, did not hesitate to take part in the last Congress of Orientalists, a mortal offence in the eyes of the Sovereign Pontiff. He has already published several valuable essays, always, however, using the greatest prudence in order not to shock the ecclesiastical authorities. I will only mention two of his publications: first, his Italian version of the Gospels, which is the first part of a complete translation of the Bible, the object of which is to bring science and faith into harmony, and to put the results of critical studies within the reach of Italian Catholics. In a brief introduction, he asserts, contrary to tradition, that the Gospel of Mark is the earliest in date, and that Matthew was preceded by an Aramaic original. While following the text of the Vulgate, he has recourse to the Greek to explain several obscure passages, *e.g.*, *Matt.* vi. 11 (*panem supersubstantialem*), and *Luke* xi. 3 (*panem quotidianum*), translated by 'pane necessario.' Elsewhere (*e.g.* *Luke* ii. 14, x. 41, 42), the notes fix the best Greek text, or imply (*Matt.* xxvii. 35; *John* v. 4, vii. 53—viii. 11; *Mark* xvi. 9—19) that passages have been interpolated, concerning the authenticity of which doubts are permitted, though here Minocchi is less categorical than in his articles in the Reviews. Further, I know on good authority that the manuscript contained a much greater number of important changes. For instance, the famous 'gratia plena' (*Luke* i. 28) was rendered 'graziata,' *i.e.*, 'favoured by the divine grace' (*Eph.* i.

6), and the following clause 'benedicta tu in mulieribus' was marked as lacking in critical authority. But Rome has obliged him to tone down many passages; and this is the only possible explanation of doctrinal notes that contradict the translation itself (*e.g.* *Matt.* i. 25, *cf.* *Luke* ii. 7; *Mark* iii. 21; *John* vii. 5; *Matt.* xvi. 19; *John* iii. 5, etc.).

Minocchi, having to reckon with ecclesiastical approbation, is not free in his movements. This is noticeable also in the Review he has just founded and which he edits, 'Studi Religiosi.' This Review is purely historical and critical. It addresses itself to the clergy and Catholic laity, endeavouring to acquaint them with the progress of religious science in order to awaken the Christian consciousness within them. Archæological, philological, historical, social, and artistic studies form the bulk of its contents. (Programme distributed in May, 1900.) The first number was issued at the beginning of the present year, and is very interesting reading. There is really here a little movement, very prudent, but real, and deserving the sympathy of all who are fighting for the independence of religious thought. But the first number had scarcely seen the light when it was bitterly criticised by the clerical journal 'Civiltà Cattolica.' It was particularly hostile to the chronicle which gave a rapid sketch of all works that had appeared in the course of the month, whether Protestant or Catholic; and its remarks remind one of the saying ascribed to Mahomet

concerning the Library of Alexandria, 'The learned have no need of this sort of information; it is dangerous for the ignorant: therefore it is useless.'

Professor Umberto Fracassini, Rector of the Seminary at Perugia, and one of the contributors to the above Review, has not written much, but has exerted a certain influence by his teaching. He has been studying the Bible for a considerable number of years, being persuaded that such study according to modern critical methods, and with the modern resources of history and philology, cannot but aid its understanding and render service to religion. But he too, like all the others, is obliged to keep back his thoughts.

The men I have named are certainly not the only ones; but they are, I believe, the most active.

Why are there so few of them?

The want of money, the necessity of gaining one's livelihood, the lower intellectual standard, as compared with other countries, the insufficiency of previous preparation, the absence of readers who take an interest in religious questions, the climate itself, which produces an easy-going carelessness,—all these things may do their part; but the great obstacle, I might say the only serious obstacle, is the Vatican and the power of the Jesuits. The working clergy are ruled from above, watched and spied, and *cannot* move freely.

On the day when the Vatican would cease to restrict liberty of thought, we should see a vast

number of original thinkers and writers come rapidly forward, for Italy, the classic land of the Renaissance, bears within it potentially a productive intellectual power, which is now only lying dormant.

For the present, we scarcely read anything beyond essays in historical criticism, where the documents, of which the authenticity cannot be denied, serve as evidence, and constitute a force and a weapon.

III.

Among the laity we meet with the same currents that we have observed in the ecclesiastical world.

We cannot devote much time to those Catholic writers who are mainly concerned with political and patriotic questions. They are numerous and very able; but they hardly come within the scope of the present paper. I will only mention Giacomo Pisani, of San Remo, an engineer and formerly a deputy, as his writings also touch the religious question. In his first work, 'The States and Religion,' in five parts, after having (1) laid down the general principles furnished by the teaching of history, he speaks (2) of the influence of the States on the Christian religion, degenerating into the Catholic religion, down to the time of the Reformation, (3) of the disastrous effects of the Catholic religion on the States that remained Catholic, and,

as a contrast, of the beneficent influence of the Reformation in Protestant countries; and lastly (4), he foretells the inevitable decay of the Catholic States and the continued progress of the Protestant nations.

In a second work, entitled 'Liberties under the Monarchy' (San Remo, 1898), while writing in favour of constitutional monarchy, he declares Religion to be the basis of morality, and consequently of the excellence of the State. 'A good religion,' says he, 'is the bread of life of every nation.' Without a reform which shall give Italy the means of having a pure, patriotic, and independent education, it will not be possible to have a country in conformity with the ideal of the good citizen.

The Catholic Italians who desire to see more religious vitality are equally numerous. Speaking generally, they turn their attention either to the social questions which now occupy all minds, or to questions of a purely moral order.

Duke Pompeo Litta, the descendant and last representative of the ancient house of Litta Visconti, a Ghibelline family in the old days, very broad in their ideas under the French Revolution and during the struggle for Italian independence, is a man of great modern culture. By his writings, and by the example of his life, he favours the moral and social demands of the people. In religion he claims absolute liberty for the individual. He is admirably seconded by his wife (née Jane Johnstone Perry), and occupies himself particularly on behalf of the

numerous peasants on and near his estate at Casale Litta, near Milan.

Count Emiliano di Parravicino, of Milan, and the Countess Sabina (née de Revel), his wife, endeavour to bring the Church back to its high mission of saving and perfecting humanity. They wish to see religion freed from all that turns it aside from that lofty aim, *e.g.*, the division between science and faith, and, in Italy, the disagreement between Church and State.

Enrico Catellani, who has been Professor of International Law at Padua for seventeen years, sometimes treats of religious questions, both in articles and in his reviews of R. Mariano's works. According to him, 'the greatest misfortune of Italy is that she perpetually oscillates between incredulity and clericalism. A living and active form of Non-Papal Christianity could alone save her: the faithful would then have a generous faith, and their religious sincerity would show itself in all the acts of practical and civil life.'

Lastly let us mention, but rather by way of encouragement, the review, 'In Cammino,' of Milan, founded under the inspiration of Bonomelli, Semeria, and Fogazzaro, and conducted by students. Its aims are to interest the young in moral and social problems and to develop home life and moral purity. F. E. Gallarati-Scotti, of a somewhat mystical turn, and Giuseppe Gallavresi, who has more independent views, are members of the editorial committee. I have perused nearly 400 pages

of their publication, but, while I admire the moral aims which do credit to the students of the University of Milan, I cannot discern here a conscious aspiration for dogmatic emancipation.

I now hasten to bring men to your notice who, in virtue of their position, exercise a wider influence.

Firstly, the Deputy Pompeo Molmenti. He has been in the Chamber for more than ten years, and while there has always maintained that the religious sentiment is indispensable for the education of the rising generations. The ethics of the Gospel being the purest in existence, he would wish to see it triumph in Italy, 'for,' says he, 'the Christian idea in the schools is a guarantee of morality and the source of Liberal convictions in the true sense of the word. On the one hand, religious instruction should be compulsory for all children, except for those whose parents object to it; on the other hand, it should be entirely impartial, independent of any kind of denominational creed—above all, separate from the Vatican. If the antagonism between religion and patriotism were to last much longer, it might result in a schism being thought of.' In fact, the idea of a schism ferments in many minds, and this challenge, thrown out before the whole Parliament to the clerical Intransigents, depicts the present situation better than anything else.

In 1898 the Deputy Bianchi, a Neapolitan professor, had spoken nearly to the same effect in the Chamber. Though the Italian school instructs the

children, said he, it does not educate them. Where is the remedy to be found? It would be a mistake to go back simply to the dogmatic or catechetical religious teaching. The dogmatic Church does not educate. Education ought to be essentially practical and religious, in order to form the moral conscience. The reading of the Bible, freely practised, will be a help to the attainment of this object, without taking into account the fact that the Bible will suit all confessions, Catholics as well as Protestants. 'Ma che Bibbiaaaa! . . .' cried out a sceptical interrupter.

Professor Felice Tocco, of Florence, has expressed his religious opinions in lectures rather than in his writings. He hopes that one day the section of the clergy which is already weary of the uncompromising attitude of the Jesuits will have the courage to make its voice heard, not only below, but also above, which would be of greater value. In Italy, a reform of the Church outside of Catholicism not only would have no connecting link with the traditions of the past, but would remain a Utopia. The only reform which has any chance of success is the reform of the Church by the Church, as the great patriots, from Dante to Rosmini, have always desired. Laymen could not put themselves at the head of the movement without awakening suspicions and jealousies; as for the clergy, they are not free enough to venture on any such enterprise.

Professor C. Francesco Gabba desires before all

things a disciplinary reform in Italy. The priests ought never to meddle with politics, and should devote themselves exclusively to moral and social education.

On November 20th, 1898, when the death of Savonarola was commemorated at Ferrara, Ernesto Masi, to whom the official speech was entrusted, called the Dominican the greatest conscience of the Renaissance, and did not conceal his regret that he had not dared to do more.

Turning our attention in a rather different direction, among those who vindicate the claims of science we may mention in the first place Professor Luigi Luzzatti, whose discourse on 'Science and Faith,' read to the Academy dei Lincei, caused some sensation in Italy by showing that it was possible to have a religious belief and at the same time to honour science. The eminent professor and economist is too well known for me to analyze his position fitly in a few lines. I will only quote a sentence from one of his earlier writings ('Un precursore della libertà di coscienza dimenticato'), which illustrates his religious tendency: 'The sentiment of the divine is natural to the human soul,' says he, 'but the soul needs to express it in all liberty and in various forms: liberty and variety are the elements of the Divinity itself. Life without free faith and free science would resemble an extinct planet, deprived of light and heat.'

Francesco L. Pullé, Professor of Sanscrit at Bologna, is likewise well known to you. Though

bound by family ties to the traditions of the past, he early emancipated himself by study from religious and social prejudices, and courageously affirmed his new opinions. When in 1870-73 the clericals carried on a bitter and cunning warfare against Professors Trezza, Mantegazza, Herzen, and Schiff, of the Institute of Higher Studies at Florence, Francesco Pullé defended them openly; more than that, he led an organized opposition to the installation of the Jesuits, which cost him several days in prison. He taught at Padua for fourteen years, at Pisa for ten; at present he is at Bologna. He has never ceased to vindicate the claims of science, and has striven to train the minds of his students to freedom of thought.

I pass by other interesting names in order to come to a few eminent men who have dealt with religious and theological questions, independently of dogmatic routine.

Though I have set myself the task to speak only of the living, I cannot omit all reference to David Castelli, who died on January 13th, 1901. His religion—he was a Jew—had not prevented his appointment in 1876 as Professor of Hebrew at the Florence Faculty of Letters. He wrote numerous works, which show both a perfect knowledge of the Bible and a truly scientific method. He was the first in Italy to make known by his works the results of German criticism. Of all Italians, he was certainly the one who stood nearest to our Protestant theologians, or rather to our great

masters of exegesis. If he was not their equal in depth and erudition, his knowledge was as sure as it was extensive, and he possessed one rare quality, the faculty of bringing his teaching within reach of minds quite unprepared for the great questions raised by the study of the Hebrew documents. His scientific testament is his 'Political and Literary History of the Jews' (1899), a clear and precise résumé of the generally accepted results of modern criticism, an animated picture of Jewish life in conformity with its chronological development, and freed from the legends which make it less credible. If I add that he did not conceal his sympathy for Christianity, and that the pages he devoted to Jesus are among the most beautiful of his writings, you will understand the confidence inspired by the impartiality of this son of Israel.

Among the living, the first name I will recall to you is that of Baldassare Labanca, who has been Professor of the History of Christianity at Rome since 1886, and whose writings have been deservedly appreciated in Europe. In his opening lecture ('La religione per le Università è un problema, non un assioma'), he sets forth his principles. 'In the first place,' says he, 'the History of Religions must not be a poem or a psalmody; it is not its duty to strike up the hymn of victory, nor to murmur the prayers of the dead to express this or that religious sentiment. Nor should the History of Religions be an apology or a polemic: its task is not to exalt one religion at the expense of another. Lastly, the

History of Religions should not be a theology, nor a philosophy ; it will not rest on dogmatic or systematic premises, nor will it weave its web, thread by thread, after a pattern supplied by theologians or philosophers. . . . What is wanted to-day is a Religious History that shall be neither poetical, nor artistic, nor heroic, nor dogmatic, nor systematic, but critical : it must be founded on the study of the sources and dominated by the interest of truth for truth's sake.'

These elevated principles, as praiseworthy as they are rare, have been put into practice by Signor Labanca in his writings and in his course of lectures on the History of Christianity. According to him, an impartial and independent study of the History of Christianity will lead to the overthrow of many prejudices and of many Catholic dogmas that were combated by the Reformers, and among the rest by the two Italians, Fausto and Lelio Socini. What Italy needs is a reasonable and civic Christianity ; reasonable by being purged from thaumaturgical, eschatological, apocalyptical beliefs, which, though efficacious in the time of Jesus, are sterile in our day ; civic in so far as it shall be adapted, on its ethical side, to the new individual and social requirements of the age.

Signor Labanca has not sown the seed in vain : Several students of the University of Rome, at the close of their course of study, have already presented 'theses' on religious subjects, and the younger generation is beginning to form an independent element which prepares a better future for Italy.

At Naples, the chair of History of Christianity was long occupied by Professor Raffaele Mariano, who has now retired to Florence. I shall speak of him briefly : I cannot count him among the friends of criticism ; but, as he does not write to uphold the official dogmas, he deserves to be mentioned. As a populariser of religious questions, he has done some service to science, and more particularly to apologetics. However, as he says himself, he offers ' no new or original researches, no study of the sources and original texts, no collations, amendments, and palæological reconstitutions, no grammatical and linguistic interpretations of the documents.' ('*La conversione del mondo al cristianesimo*,' 1901, p. 30.) What he aims at is to show the Italian people that the Christian religion is the ideal of life, ' the only anchor of salvation in storms, the true and unique salt for the preservation of society from corruption.' Formerly, Signor Mariano strongly inclined to Protestantism ; now he appears to have evolved in an opposite direction, and he strives for a reform of Catholicism itself, such as shall produce a more spiritual and more practical Christianity.

The University of Naples also counts among its professors the Commander Alessandro Chiappelli. He is a thinker who has nothing superficial, a literary philosopher with the soul of an artist. I still retain a vivid recollection of the lessons I received from him seventeen years ago, when he began his career as a teacher, at the Dante College in Florence. Since then, his mind has taken ever fuller possession

of itself ; the ideal attracted him, and he has given it a concrete expression, striving to waken in Italian consciences the desire for a lofty aim in philosophy, in religion, and in social work. He hopes to attain his aim by an impartial and severe criticism of the ancient and modern forms of thought in these three departments. His first publications were works on Hellenic philosophy ; then he turned his attention to primitive Christianity and the first centuries of the Church. In a series of books, or articles, appearing in the '*Nuova Antologia*,' he has popularised the labours of modern criticism, particularly those of the German school, and has studied the most important Christian documents that have been discovered in recent years. I will only give one example. In his treatise entitled '*The Doctrine of the Resurrection of the Flesh*' (1894), he studies the history of the dogma chronologically, documents in hand, from its origin to its definite establishment, and seeks to discover the causes that gave birth to it. The method is sure and rigorous, and would lead him to conclusions flatly opposed to tradition ; but, doubtless from prudential motives, he limits his task to that of a historian. He says enough, however, for us to divine in him a mind entirely emancipated from dogmatism.

Like so many others in our own day, Professor Chiapelli, without abandoning his philosophical and religious studies, now devotes himself chiefly to social questions. Socialism is, in Italy, a latent danger, too grave and too threatening for the élite

of the nation to do otherwise than study the means of remedy.

Roberto Schiattarella, Professor at the University of Palermo, is much more radical. In his work, 'The Bible and Science,' (Napoli, 1896), he compares the Biblical narrative of the Creation with modern scientific discoveries, and concludes that the Biblical account is of no authority. In his lecture, 'The Teachings of Jesus and the Doctrine of Paul' (Palermo, 1897), he follows Baur, Renan, and Strauss. In his book, 'Angels and Demons' (Firenze, 1898), he points out the incoherency of angelology and demonology. Finally, in his 'Miracles and Prophecies' (Firenze, 1899), he declares that all religions are equally supported by a miracle, that the miracles attributed to Christ could consequently not prove the excellence of Christianity, and that it is senseless to make a distinction between false and true miracles, every religion having invariably pronounced its own miracles to be true and those of its neighbour false. The reproach that we have to make against this writer concerns not his method, which is excellent, but a vivacity of language which sometimes goes beyond the bounds of propriety, and allows the reader to suppose that he demolishes the old religious traditions merely for the pleasure of seeing them crumble down.

The Senator Gaetano Negri is no less independent of tradition, and is perfectly serious. He has already published numerous articles and some

valuable books on religious questions. The three following—'Segni dei tempi,' 'Rumori Mondani,' 'Meditazioni Vagabonde,' are both pleasant and useful reading; as an example in proof of this I may refer to his admirable essay on St. Paul (Med. Vagab., pp. 227-463). Speaking generally, his writings are distinguished by critical method, constant carefulness in objective research, the absence of any preconceived dogmatic idea, and respect for the beliefs of others. (Segni, p. xi.)

'I am,' he writes, 'naturally inclined to criticism. This critical tendency, in virtue of which knowledge is a fact that subsists by itself and suffices for itself, without resting on any premiss of faith, is in my opinion the intellectual phenomenon which characterizes the modern spirit.'

In spite of that, he clearly feels the need of religion. 'Humanity,' he says elsewhere, 'cannot do without a religion. Man will always have a God, . . . but religion is necessarily imperfect and inadequate in its manifestations. If Christianity is immortal, it is not that it is the pre-eminently divine religion, but rather because it is the pre-eminently human religion, and man finds in this human inspiration a source of life which supplies the want caused by the exhaustion of dogmatic inspiration. . . . Yet Christianity is not only an ethical system, it is also a religion, and as a religion it cannot do without metaphysic. What is to be done with the metaphysical dogmatism of the positive religions, which is crumbling on all sides? This fallen ground shall

be taken from the river-bed, not to be destroyed or dispersed to the four winds of heaven, but to be ranged on the two banks. It will serve as a dike. And there it shall be left: first, because in that position it will not obstruct the free navigation of the river, then, because if it were touched it would crumble into dust, and the dike would be broken' (Med. Vagab., lxi.-lxiv. pass. and p. 23.) And in another place: 'For me, the religious problem resolves itself into a dilemma which is involved in the inevitable attitude of the modern mind:—either a religion without dogmas, which amounts to a sentiment of dependence on an absolute principle; or a religion with the ancient dogmas considered as symbols that one abstains from discussing. . . . At present, critical thought only knows this: that it is no longer able to create new dogmatics, or rather that it is incapable of discussing the ancient dogmas without destroying them' (Med. Vagab., p. 25.)

Gaetano Negri inclines rather to preserve all the ancient symbols by idealising them (Segni, p. 202 sq.). He does not appear to have an unlimited confidence in Liberalism. The benevolent homage he renders to men like Lobstein, Réville, Sabatier, and many more, does not prevent him from asking: 'Can this religion, deprived of all external sanction, become the religion of the multitudes? Would it be possible to lead the great mass of the people to the threshold of this paternal Deism, and to stop it there? Is not the anthropomorphism of the First Cause even greater when it is stripped of all the dogmatic

wrappings that altered its essence, but at the same time veiled it?' (Med. Vagab. lv.).

I do not say it by way of criticising the eminent Senator; but Liberalism is in no respect an innovation: it restores the method and the authentic teachings of Jesus, which were so powerful in their influence on the masses (poor Galilean fishermen), just because they brought heaven near to earth.

IV.

In conclusion, I reserve a special paragraph for the subject of the teaching of Ecclesiastical Law in Italy.

It was on the point of being abolished, in 1873, at the time of the suppression of the Faculties of Theology. It was, however, admitted into the State Universities, but at first it remained sterile. The lectures continued to be given by the old professors appointed under the former régime, and this is still the case to-day at Rome. The old professors,—trained not only in the methods but also in the dogmatic and intolerant ideas of the days when this science, purely Catholic, was completely in the hands of the priests,—taught nothing but the Canon Law.

The first who endeavoured to reform this state of things was Francesco Scaduto, born in 1858, a pupil of Hinschius, of Berlin, then professor at Palermo, and at present at Naples.

The movement was continued by Professor

F. Ruffini (to whose kindness I owe these particulars). Signor Ruffini, born in 1863, is a Piedmontese. After studying for two terms at Leipzig under Friedberg, he was appointed professor successively at Pavia, at Genoa, and lastly at Turin.

The methods of these two jurists differ. Scaduto attaches more importance to the tribunals, while Ruffini insists on the scientific movement. But their aim is the same: the teaching of both is not only scientific, but essentially liberal. In their view, Ecclesiastical Jurisprudence is a pure science like any other, not belonging to the sectarian domain; more strictly speaking, a State science, *i.e.*, a science which teaches the State how to behave towards the different churches, so as to guarantee to each the most unlimited liberty of thought.

Each of these professors has already a disciple. Scaduto, Professor Schiappoli, who, after hearing Hinschius lecture for a year, is now teaching at Pavia; Ruffini, Professor Galante, who completed his studies under Hinschius and Friedberg, and is now at the University of Innsbruck, where he cares for the Italian students in Austria. Other young jurists, trained by the two masters, are completing their studies in Germany, and it is a remarkable fact that they all, masters and pupils, have chosen Protestant professors. 'The Catholic professors,' Ruffini said to me, 'have not the same impartiality; some of them, though very capable, are even intolerant. We who are Catholics, penetrated by Catholic education and Catholic ideas,

could find no better way of attaining that absolute impartiality and serenity of judgment which we ardently desire to acquire, than by completing our politico-ecclesiastical education at a Protestant University.'

In short, Ecclesiastical Jurisprudence, the only branch of theological teaching now given in the Universities of Italy, is to-day penetrated with Liberal ideas. 'We endeavour not to take sides with any particular religious movement,' says Ruffini, 'but we certainly cannot help regarding with sympathy the spread of religious tendencies favourable to liberty. We have a double aim: above all to protect the Italian State from the hostilities of the Catholic Church, and especially of the Roman Curia, and also to propagate religious Liberalism among the young generation that attends our lectures. The Protestant Churches may always be sure to find in us convinced and resolute defenders of the most unlimited liberty of conscience and of worship; it would be very difficult, however, for one of us to join the adherents of this or that confession, or to work for the spread of one catechism rather than another. Our highest aspiration is to make Italy a country in which religious liberty, to its full ideal extent, shall be guaranteed, not only by the laws, but also in practice, and that, if possible, in a more absolute and more complete fashion than in any other land.'

These are noble words, gentlemen, and they point to an ideal worthy of all our sympathy. And

even if the dream be too beautiful to be transformed into concrete reality, all honour to the men who trace out for their efforts the loftiest aim that it is possible for them to conceive!

Professor Ruffini has just published the first volume of a historical study on 'Religious Liberty' (Turin, 1900) from the origin of the church to our own day, in which we find his aspirations reflected. The most original feature in this first volume is the part that the author attributes to the Italians of the period of the Renaissance in the work of the Reformation. 'While the Protestants,' says he, 'were working for the supremacy of dogma, the Italian Humanists, exiled from their country for religious motives, toiled for the nobler supremacy of the enlightened mind, which can suffer no coercion, nor any restriction of religious liberty.' And in revealing to the Italians of to-day the noble deeds done by their forefathers on behalf of the most righteous of causes, he does not desire platonically to excite their national pride; his one aim is, I repeat it, to bring Italian thought back to Liberal traditions.

V.

I have concluded my task.

To the names I have mentioned, you might add those of other persons of more or less liberal sentiments. For instance, Senator Villari, whose real thoughts, however, are rather difficult to grasp, for

he avoids pronouncing himself,—young professors, temporarily charged with courses of lectures on Ecclesiastical Law, such as Tamassia at Padua, Gaudenzi at Bologna, Brandileone at Parma, Calisse at Pisa, Leporini at Siena, Monenti at Genoa, Zdekauer at Macerata, Salvioli at Palermo, etc.—also De Gubernatis, Guidi, Nocentini, Schiapparelli at Rome, D'Ercole at Turin, Siotto-Pintòr at Urbino, Vignoli at Milan, Ruini, Lasinio, Pavolini, Del Vecchio, and B. Teloni at Florence. The last-mentioned, Secretary of the Italian Asiatic Society, occupies himself with Assyriology, but his researches have led him to recognize the necessity of the study of the Bible, 'a historical and literary monument,' says he, 'of the first order,' and he wishes Catholics to have the wide and deep knowledge of it that is possessed by Protestants. I shall not speak of the novels of Antonio Fogazzaro, although his attempts to harmonize the theory of evolution with religion are of a nature to awaken our interest. Nor will I do more than mention in passing the influence of journals such as *La Tribuna* of Rome, which sometimes contain excellent articles; it is, however, only indirectly that they touch religious questions, in their relation to politics.

In a rapid study like this, it was impossible to be complete, and I have only named representatives, so to speak, of the different currents of thought. The following sentences may serve as a resumé of what can be said on the subject :—

(1.) While welcoming the individual efforts of a

few courageous men who prepare the way for future generations, we recognize that 'there is nothing or very little in Italy that can be compared with the movement of religious thought that is to be seen in Protestant countries.'

(2.) 'In Italy, the religious problem is complicated by the national and patriotic question. As a result of this, there is in Catholicism a kind of latent and potential schism.' The patriotic Catholics—those who are called in Italy Liberal Catholics—in presence of the uncompromising attitude of the Vatican, feel in their hearts the presentiment of a coming divorce.

(3.) Unhappily, as Senator Negri and Deputy Molmenti have remarked, 'Italy is not the land of religious reforms. For such great reforms, the people must have a great ideal.' 'Children of our age, we have no longer a faith strong enough to make this schism evident and active; and, consequently, Italy rests on the strangest and most irrational of compromises, not having enough faith either to obey entirely or to disobey entirely.'

(4.) Lastly, to quote the words of a Professor of Philosophy, Augusto Conti: 'In Italy, a man is either a Catholic or a Rationalist; but rationalism has its own hypocrisies. Many of those who boast of their freethinking go to church with their families, and die as Christians.'

This is a somewhat pessimistic declaration, but the professor is not altogether wrong.

In Italy, there is no Religious Liberalism, as we

understand it: a power of higher life, putting the creature in direct contact with his Creator, without binding him to dogmatic formulæ—placing the religious sentiment in conscience, and making man greater by enlarging his responsibility, for ‘noblesse oblige.’

There is liberty of thought, boldness of criticism, opposition to the official dogmas, weakening of ecclesiastical ties, all in a sporadic manner,—but all these things are a protest of offended reason; not the cry of conscience seeking to lay hold of God, wishing to feel him near, and desiring to draw near to him by personal experience.

The best minds are agitated by a feeling of distress; in the *élite* of the clergy and of the nation, it is the anguish of a crisis that many of us have known before reaching the haven,—the fear of losing faith itself, by losing the belief in the official dogmas,—a fear which is all the greater where Catholicism has accustomed men’s consciences to a passive acceptance of doctrines;—and among those who have lost this belief, there is almost the conviction that they have no God any more, no religion any more, a hopeless thought for the old man who feels his end drawing near, and knows that the official Church has no favours except for those of her children whose fidelity does not stop short of blinding them.

Then, men hide their crisis. They do not dare to seek peace in discussion, in the exchange of ideas. Prudence obliges them to keep silence as completely as possible. They are afraid of committing them-

selves. They only utter half their thoughts. And if they talk little, they write still less ; and, when they do write, you may be sure they do not say the quarter of what they think. If they did, they would find no publisher ; the publishers rarely print a book at their own risk, unless it has the 'imprimatur.' And the book that, by dint of economy, perhaps of privation, authors print at their own expense, finds no readers ; it has been marked out as dangerous. Besides, they risk losing their modest salary, and what can one do without bread and without home ? Only the rich can have that independence, which is denied to the poor, however industrious. But between those written lines, which scarcely mark a slight progress, how many stifled cries, how many generous thoughts !

The Liberal movement, in Italy, is modest and timid ; but on the classic soil of the Renaissance, it has promises for the future. For our part, we shall certainly aid its progress, in some measure, by assuring all those of our sympathy who have already pronounced themselves. Isolation kills,—the hand stretched out fraternally sustains and encourages !

LIBERAL RELIGIOUS 'THOUGHT WITHIN THE DUTCH REFORMED CHURCH.

BY PROFESSOR B. D. EERDMANS, D.D., LEIDEN.

I WISH to make to you some communications about liberal religious thought within the Dutch Reformed Church. I especially refer to this church, not because I am a member of it, but because it was the Church of the State up to the beginning of the nineteenth century, and still is the most important church of Protestant Holland. In the beginning of the nineteenth century it lost its old position by the influence of the French Revolution, by which many things were changed in our country and equal rights were granted to the various churches.

I hope you will take some interest in Dutch religious life, for, though our country is small, and though, in these times in which the so-called Great Powers suppose that they have a right to govern the fate of mankind, it has lost the political importance it once possessed, yet I venture to say that as to liberal religious thought we are not obliged to refer to the glory of the past.

The name of Kuenen is known to many of you. A German scholar called him 'the conscience of the science of higher criticism.' His eminent learning was of influence not only in Holland but also abroad. Our Tiele still works with youthful strength in the history of religions, and we are proud of him. Our Scholten and Opzoomer were, perhaps, less known abroad, but in Holland they had no smaller reputation than Kuenen and Tiele. In dogmatics and philosophy they were leading masters. I do not make these remarks to boast of the merits of Dutch scholars, but in a meeting like this I feel obliged to mention their names with great thankfulness.

By their influence liberal Christian religion, as we know it now, has been preached from our pulpits since the middle of the nineteenth century. A great number of ministers were converted to the new ideas, and numerous pupils of the Leiden University propagated them all over the country. The new doctrine drew much attention. The churches were filled by large crowds anxious to be informed about it.

People called the new ideas 'Modern,' and 'Modernism' still is the name most used for the liberal religious party in Holland. The contents of the liberal religious faith may be expressed by the words: The belief in the living God, the Father of mankind, whose Spirit is living in the hearts of his children, who is to be served according to the principles of the doctrine of Jesus, our Master.

From the year 1850 to 1870 ministers did their very best in preaching against the old doctrines, and their fighting the common opinions was of great influence among the middle classes and educated people. I suppose you do not understand how it was possible to deny the truth of the common doctrines, without being expelled by the church government, as for instance happened in Scotland to your much-esteemed Professor Robertson Smith. The reason is, firstly, that the Dutch Reformed Church does not have bishops or superintendents. It is ruled by a Synod, which changes every year. But if we had possessed bishops, they would not have been able to cavil, as the Church has been on bad terms with its own Confession now for nearly three centuries. The doctrine of our Church was fixed by the National Synod at Dordrecht in 1618. It is chiefly contained in the so-called Dutch Confession in thirty-seven articles, and the Catechism.

The principle of the Confession is that there shall not be anything in it that is not conformable to the Holy Scripture. Very soon after 1618 divergent opinions were preached by ministers, who referred to the Holy Scripture as justifying them in doing so. Continued study of the Bible and the progress of science became of ever-growing influence. The only way to save the doctrine would have been to convoke a National Synod in order to expel the heretics. But at that time the Church was a State Church, and the General States of the Dutch Republic would not give permission.

So it was impossible to convoke a National Synod until 1816, when the new Kingdom of Holland was established. But then the difference of opinions was so great that the Synod did not venture to give any distinct determination of the contents of the doctrine. It obliged the ministers to agree with the *principles* of the Confession, without saying what these principles were. And so it has remained until to-day. So the actual position is, that everybody has to determine for himself whether he agrees with those principles, and that he has to find these in his own way.

Of course a number of orthodox people did not like such regulations. In 1834, adherents of the old Confession left the Church and founded a congregation of their own—the so-called Christian Reformed Church. In 1886 a new exodus took place under the well-known Calvinistic politician, the Rev. Dr. Kuyper. In several places they tried to take with them, in addition to their belief of the old Confession, the possessions of the parish; and it is not yet forgotten in Holland that Dr. Kuyper and his friends took crowbars and saws, and tried to open, during the night, the money-cases in the new church at Amsterdam. The judge, however, declared they should be content with the belief in the old Confession, without anything else.

In 1860 the whole Dutch Reformed Church seemed to be gained for liberal thought, and numbers of parishes called liberal ministers. In those days there was no general suffrage. The ministers were called by the vestry, which chose its own

members, belonging to the educated middle classes. In 1869, however, the liberals were the cause of their own death by giving the right to vote to every member of age that was happy enough to be a man and not a woman. In consequence of this the influence of the less educated people brought new men into the vestry, and when a minister's place became vacant an orthodox minister was called by them. In many towns the liberal ministers are dying out, or are already gone. It is quite natural that the less educated people should not agree with the new opinions, for during several years denials and negations formed the greater part of a sermon, and in the zeal for denying, some ministers forgot to edify.

For instance, a well-known journalist in Holland, who has retired from preaching, one Sunday preached a sermon on 'Attending Divine Service,' and he expatiated on the wrong motives most people had in doing so, and on the uselessness of it. After the service somebody said he had expected to hear something about the right way of attending the service, and of the great blessings this might have. 'Yes,' was the reply, 'you are right, it may be edifying; really I put that down in my notes, but I forgot to speak about it.' Such sermons were obnoxious.

Still in many towns the influence of the general suffrage would have been less felt, had not a number of members of the vestry resigned their places as soon as men whom they did not like were elected as fellow-members. So now in nearly all our towns

orthodoxy rules. This would happen the sooner as the church does not have sub-divisions of communities. For instance, Amsterdam with some 200,000 of members is one parish, ruled by one vestry.

At this moment the power of the Liberals is chiefly in the country. There numerous parishes will not call an orthodox minister. In every parish where orthodoxy rules the Liberal minority meet with great difficulties. Thus, at Leiden, there are nine ministers, and all belong to the orthodox party. Our repeated request to call a Liberal man to one of the posts when vacant has not been granted by the vestry. So we have to pay the church rates without receiving any help. We assemble every Sunday in a hall, and various ministers from other places come over for preaching, and we have our own teachers for religious instruction. So far as this, things go on pretty well ; but difficulties arise in the baptizing of the children and at confirmation. We can hardly take the children or some hundred young people and their families to another place for baptism and confirmation ; so the vestry of some liberal community comes to Leiden for these purposes, and this gives rise to endless quarrelling with the Leiden vestry. Such difficulties have caused a great number of liberals to leave our Church and join the small number of liberal communities of Remonstrants and Baptists that bid a hearty welcome to everybody who likes to join them. In doing so they save money and trouble.

Even a considerable number of ministers, tired

of struggling with an orthodox vestry, have joined the smaller communities, when they received a call. A good many of the best Remonstrant preachers formerly belonged to the Dutch Reformed Church, and many of them left us, not on account of their struggle with any difficulty, but only for the sake of a better position.

These things have considerably weakened our position in the Church. Our Church has about 1,400 communities, of which some 400 are liberal. In many of the orthodox communities there are considerable liberal minorities. We suppose that one-third of the whole Church may be reckoned to be liberal.

If all those members were thoroughly interested in the progress of liberal religious thought it would not be difficult to attain better conditions ; but I am sorry to say that a great many of them seem to have very little interest. They do not care for church and religion,—unless you are disposed to allow the name of religion to the views which some of them profess to hold. They are a class of people like the population of Alsace-Lorraine. Now, they are not good Germans, but formerly they were not good Frenchmen. In olden times they went to church without caring for religion ; now they do not care for religion, and do not go to church.

However many difficulties there may be, we do not intend to give up our position in the Church. Not for our own sake—for, happily, we are wise enough to know, as your Sterne says, that the Lord

does not ask in what coat we walked on earth, in a Remonstrant one or in a Dutch Reformed one—but for the sake of others, the more simple-minded people, who hold to their Church and are coming now to our services, who are inclined to liberal thought, but would fall back to orthodoxy if left alone. It is a pity that some of our energetic young liberal ministers take little interest in these things. They are influenced by the ideas of Tolstoy, and some of them have even resigned their position to join a Communistic colony living on agriculture near Amsterdam. We should like to have that energy working to our profit.

We are strongly encouraged in our hopes for the future by the great influence of liberal religious thought in the so-called 'orthodox' circles. An orthodox minister of to-day is quite another man from the orthodox minister of fifty years ago. Of course there is a party that dislikes all new ideas, that holds to the old opinions, but even they cannot escape the law of progress. This party is by no means a powerful one. The bulk of orthodox ministers agree with the results of Old Testament criticism, and some of them have already told their brethren to consider it reasonable to criticise the New Testament also. They are evidently on the way to liberalism. They do not like dogmatics, they say; they look upon the Confession as an old thing to be found in some very old-fashioned hymn-books, and in preaching they never mention it. The deity of Christ is, in fact, the only dogma they use as

proof of their orthodoxy. I am sure we might say that many of them have given up even that, if they would only explain in clear words what they mean by the deity of Christ.

This is the blessing of University education, which is the only way to the ministry in our Church. If all the clergy of the Church of England were bound to receive a completer education, if they were obliged to study Hebrew and Greek in order to be able to read the Bible in the original languages, I think they would be more liberal in their opinions. Our theological students have to pass the examinations of the Universities of the State.

Our theological Faculties are now quite independent of any church and perfectly free in their teaching. Formerly the theological professors had to be members of the Dutch Reformed Church, but since 1878 this law is withdrawn. Professor Tiele, a member of our Faculty, is a Remonstrant; and his successor (a Norwegian), Professor Brede Kristensen, from Christiania, is a Lutheran. In consequence of this freedom even the so-called orthodox theological professors hold most liberal ideas. There is no difference in the teaching of my orthodox colleagues about the Old Testament in the faculties at Utrecht and Gröningen and my teaching. Some students of Gröningen even told me that they were converted to liberalism by the teaching of one of their orthodox professors. At Utrecht one professor denied the Inspiration of the Bible, and another colleague told me that he believed

in the deity of Christ only as a symbol of his high significance. We might call those men Unitarians if they dared to speak in the common words instead of in old phrases.

In view of these things, I believe that this century will see a mighty progress of liberal religious thought. There are sufficient proofs that the majority of the members of the church do not really understand what it is to be orthodox. They judge from external things. A minister is looked upon as quite orthodox if in the services he asks the people to sing psalms and no other hymns.

I once preached for a friend of mine and gave a liberal sermon. Some weeks afterwards I received a call to an orthodox community near the place where my friend lived. This was astonishing to me; but I learned by information that some of the members of that vestry attended that service. I accidentally had taken the hymns only from the psalms, and so they supposed me to be orthodox!

We have good hope. In places where we are the majority we are already perfectly free; for our service consists only of singing and the delivery of a sermon. No Creed is read, no Confessions answered to; we are free in the use of the old ritual. If we like it, we may do so; if we do not like it, we are allowed to make our own ritual.

So there is actually no difference between us and the Remonstrants, the Mennonites, and the liberal Lutherans. No walls of different doctrine separate us. The various ministers very often preach in the

churches of other congregations. One day we must come to a great union of all those churches. The time for that is not yet come. There are too many circumstances prohibiting it now ; and one of these is that liberal religious thought is not popular enough among the bulk of the members of some churches. The people are not yet ripe for it. This is a matter of generations and not of years. We must go on working, teaching, and preaching. In looking forward to this future, we know that we are not working for the glory of our own particular ideas ; we are impelled by the deep conviction that it is only a pure and free faith in the living God, who loves all his creatures, that can give mankind happiness and peace.

THE DUTCH MENNONITE COMMUNITY.

BY THE REV. F. C. FLEISCHER, BROEK-OP-LANGENDIJK.

IN undertaking to speak of the place of the Dutch Mennonites in the struggle for religious liberty and betterment, I find I have a very difficult task to perform. For I must try to compress a history of nearly four centuries into the brief space of time allotted to me. And yet it must be done. For if it be accepted as a fact, that it is next to impossible to understand any community without full knowledge of its past, this is most decidedly the case with the Mennonite congregations. What they are, what they aim at, what they promise for the future—it all lies in their past.

I purpose to throw my searchlight upon this chapter of ecclesiastical history from two sides, so that the Dutch Mennonites may appear before you as a community of religious radicals, and as a community holding free individual convictions.

I.

A COMMUNITY OF RELIGIOUS RADICALS.

The great reformers—Luther, Calvin, Zwingli, Cranmer—with one hand took what was new, and with the other they clung to what was old and established. Hence many of the institutions, practices, and dogmas of the Roman Catholics have been preserved in many of the Protestant Churches.

But there were other friends of the new light who could not allow Protestant principles to suffer, and not to be acted up to consistently. They were perhaps the most independent, also the least organised—tenacious, indomitable minds, but forsaken by the majority in days of persecution.

Among these radicals there were some who were anxious to reform, nay to renew the Christian life—the Baptizers;¹ and others who wished to reform the Christian dogmatics—the Antitrinitarians. Both these radical sections aimed at the Apostolic principle of purification. ‘Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature; old things are past away; behold all things have become new.’—(*II. Cor. v. 17.*)

In the long run these two currents were sure to meet. And so it happens, as a living proof thereof,

¹ I use the term ‘Baptizers’ (Doopers, Täufer), in order to distinguish them from the well-known ‘Baptists,’ with whom we are sometimes very unjustly confounded.

that I, a twentieth-century Baptizer, am here to-day amongst twentieth-century Antitrinitarians.

These religious radicals did not originally stand on any other foundation than the great Reformers. Luther himself hesitated long. So did Melancthon. At first the Baptizers confidently approached the Evangelicals, until the latter, led by considerations of prevailing political wisdom, strongly opposed the radicalism of the former.

The Reformers as well as the Roman Catholic Hierarchy upheld the error, that not only is there a general religious truth, but also that this may be fixed so clearly, so convincingly, and so indisputably, that no one can be allowed to have an opinion of one's own. Those who ventured, nevertheless, to have such a particular opinion, were liable to the death penalty. And where the Reformers held the legal sword, they did not hesitate to use it against such intolerable sinners.

On January 5th, 1527, their first victim fell. This was Felix Manz, a young and learned man of a distinguished family in Zürich, who had committed the crime of controverting in public Zwingli's theses on Christian Baptism, and of disapproving of cruel, abominable war. Manz was drowned in the beautiful lake of Zürich. *Mergatur qui iterum mergit* or *Mergatur qui mergitur*, Zwingli is asserted to have said.

This first victim of our community was followed by hundreds of others in nearly every country: persecution drove a portion of the Baptizers to despair,

and caused the shameful insurrection at Münster, in Germany, near our Dutch frontiers, which was greatly owing to the action of Dutch Baptizers.

The great majority of Baptizers, however, refused to take any part in such troubles ; and to the latter came, when the fulness of time was come, 'our principal leader,' Menno Simons, who had been a vicar-priest at Pingjum for a period of about fifteen years, and for four years a parson at Witmarsum, at that time one of the most important congregations in Friesland (January 12th, 1536).

Menno Simons, Dirk Philips, Leenaert Bouwens, and some other calm, staid, sound, pious workers organized the peaceable Baptizers, who, bereft of many of their original leaders, were 'scattered abroad as sheep having no shepherd.'

Inclined by nature to a quiet, patient fear of God, they were strengthened on this point by the natural reaction against the excesses of the people of Münster and the Batenburgers, and by their fear of being mistaken for these turbulent and obstinate fanatics.

They applied their radicalism to their own lives, to get 'the hidden man of the heart, that which is not corruptible, a meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God a great prize.' Candour in their individual and domestic lives, love of truth, brotherly love and readiness to help, great simplicity in divine service, were some of their distinguishing marks. Their refusal to take the oath is partly due to their respect for the trustiness of their spoken

word, which should be yea, yea, and nay, nay,—partly to their respect for the Lord's commandments. Likewise, in consequence of the Evangelical precept imprinted on their souls by their aversion to the Münster atrocities, they advocated absolute defencelessness. The sermon on the Mount was to them the glorious stream of light in the Gospel, as it is in our day to the celebrated and venerable Count Leo Tolstoy and his followers; nay, in many respects, this Russian Evangelical movement may be regarded as a later form of the same religious radicalism which the sixteenth-century Mennonites defended. Each true Mennonite knew the Sermon on the Mount by heart, and likewise the Epistle of James,—very dear to him on account of its practical contents.

II.

A COMMUNITY OF FREE INDIVIDUAL CONVICTION.

A radical consistent Protestantism, in our opinion, cannot be joined with a Confessional Church strictly so called. Menno Simons and his brethren desired something different from Luther, Calvin, Zwingli, or Cranmer. These latter desired a Church; Menno wished a Congregation of Christ.

In a Congregation no one can be called master, 'for one is your master, even Christ, but he that is greatest among you shall be your servant.' Properly speaking we have no ecclesiastics. We are ourselves 'a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a peculiar people; that we should show forth the praises of him who has

called us out of darkness into his marvellous light.' The members always took an important share in all congregational business. The colleges of the prophets established in London by John à Lasco obtained great popularity, and, under new names, are reviving here and there. The confirmation of new members does not take place without the co-operation of the congregation, nor is the possibility excluded of eliminating undesirable candidates. Our deacons at Flushing were formerly obliged to hear the children after the sermon, and to attend to the catechising of the young. The other members were not obliged, but were allowed to be present.

The congregation was almost an object of worship. 'There is nothing on earth my soul loves so tenderly as the congregation,' said Menno Simons. With might and main they tried to keep the congregation holy. 'Stainless and spotless' the congregation ought to be, they said,—without any needless fear of bigotry, for they were well-advised, rational men.

The congregational discipline was vigorously maintained. The consistory of the congregation at Utrecht cited on November 14th, 1650, a bride who had been charged with unchastity. At Groningen, in the year 1681, the proposed marriage of one of the members with a second cousin was prevented for two years, because the congregation feared incest. In the eighteenth century, at Edam, one of the brethren was excommunicated on account of adultery with his maid-servant. A sea

captain was reproved because he had two guns on board, contrary to the commandment of defencelessness. He apologised, saying that he had them only to frighten, if necessary, undesirable guests, but that he did not want to kill anyone with them.

The Communion was, and is, regarded amongst us as a feast in remembrance of Jesus' death, and also as a symbol of brotherly unity. Nay, it was called 'the Unity,' and in some congregations it was to be deferred when two of the brethren lived on unfriendly terms. As soon as they were reconciled 'the Unity' was allowed again. Public law-suits were disapproved as a violation of brotherly love, and as a profanation of the congregation.

I need not say that only those who had reached genuine convictions by reflection and experience could be accepted in such a congregation. Hence the baptism of the grown-up youth as a symbol of life's consecration to worship, and the acceptance of Christian principles. The congregation ought to be composed of spiritually-minded grown-up people. And though during the first two centuries of the existence of our community the ministers were not specially trained for their work, but chosen from the brethren, there have often been highly endowed, learned, and eloquent men among them. And though we are now-a-days accustomed everywhere to ministers who have studied at the University, it nevertheless happens that gifted laymen are admitted to the ministry, and women also occasionally ascend the pulpit of some Mennonite congregations.

Appreciating the freedom to be ourselves, and our best selves, we allow the same right to others, and reprobate the imposition of a creed. Different dogmatic views exist amongst us. Even the immortality of the soul was questioned by some Mennonites of the seventeenth century.

So the Protestant dogmatic radicalism could not fail, in process of time, to meet our practical radicalism: Antitrinitarianism must meet Mennonitism.

This radicalism has long been known to us. Before Faustus Socinus preached it, the Baptizers, Hans Denck, Ludwig Hätzer, Melchior Hofman, and others were influenced by it, and the latter gave no little offence by his bold sentence: 'Cursed be the flesh of Maria!' Likewise Hans Kautz von Boeckenheim, who said: 'Jesus of Nazareth redeems us, only if we follow his steps; those who teach differently make an idol of him.'

No wonder that the Socinians, persecuted and denied everywhere else, tried to meet us. First in 1598, when Ostorodt and Woidowski came to Amsterdam, where the Reformed magistrate bereft them of their books. Disappointed by the public church, they endeavoured to enter into relations with the Mennonite minister, Hans de Ries, at Alkmaar. Afterwards in 1612 they tried to enter into relation with the Dutch Mennonites by intervention of the Mennonite congregation at Dantzic, in Prussia. Though they could not succeed with Hans de Ries, their dogmas won the acceptance of other Mennonite ministers, such as J. Outerman, of Haarlem, Nittert

Obbes, of Amsterdam, and others, and for this intercourse the Mennonites had to pay : it procured for them a new cross of persecution and suspicion. Socinianism was looked upon as little better than Paganism by the leading Reformed ecclesiastics, and soon the Mennonites were said to be *indocti Sociniani*, as the Socinians were said to be *docti Mennonitæ*.

III.

THE DUTCH MENNONITES OF THE PRESENT DAY.

In spite of many difficulties, our community has maintained itself until the present day. Persecution has now ceased ; honoured and esteemed by congenial theologians, we may undisturbedly work for our ideals of practical religious radicalism and for the rights of free individual conviction.

After days of alarming decay and threatening decline in pettiness and worldliness, we enjoy again a time of progress and improvement. Whereas in 1700 there were said to have been 160,000 Mennonite compatriots, in 1808 there were not even 27,000. Since that time we have been gaining ground again. In the nineteenth century we restored seven lost congregations and established five quite new ones. Our numbers amount at present to about 64,000 souls, of whom about 33,000 are baptized members, and about 11,000 catechumens. They belong to 129 congregations, each of which is quite independent,—an autonomous free religious republic.

We have no central Authority, Synod, Council, Conference, or anything similar. The consistory of each congregation, chosen by the members, is everywhere the highest authority. Matters of common interest are managed by voluntary co-operation,—if necessary, by means of societies founded for this or that particular purpose. Congregations, like private persons, may become members by financial subscription or otherwise, according to the rules of the Society. Congregations which do not desire to be members have no duties, nor rights. Yet their interests are properly attended to. For instance, only forty-one congregations are members of the Universal Mennonite Society (*Algemeene Doopsgezinde Societeit*); yet all our ministers, except one lay minister, are pupils of the Seminary which the Society has at the University of Amsterdam.

A considerable number of congregations (about sixty-five) receive yearly a considerable amount from the Society Fund, and depend upon its assistance in difficult circumstances. Moreover, a proverbial readiness to help and support each other exists between the congregations themselves. The rich congregations of Haarlem, Deventer, Utrecht, and other places support several dozens of less wealthy congregations. And this support is granted without any interference with the congregational business of the supported brethren, even with their financial management. In regard to our autonomy we are very particular. Without any central bond, the common interests, the spiritual

as well as the material interests, are safe—nay, they are perhaps nowhere safer than with us. And though the complete autonomy of all congregations, even of the smallest, has its drawbacks, yet we do not regret it. It is our autonomy which makes us free in regard to the evolution of religious conceptions. Without anger or dismay we can follow the progress of modern times, our organization does not prevent us from introducing what is attractive in what is new, or abolishing what is decrepit in what is old and established. The hymns in our religious services, the organization of our congregations, can be improved without any difficulty.

This condition of affairs is not accidental, but has been brought about in the course of time. Relatively the most liberal religious ideas have always been admitted into our churches, before they made breaches in the great Churches around us. When the first 'modern' (*i.e.*, Dutch liberal) minister preached in the Lutheran Church at Harlingen, his hearers said: 'He preaches like a Mennonite!' Very remarkable in its simplicity, this saying! Hence our liberalism has usually maintained an earnest character, and has not shown that harshness which manifests itself when a hard struggle for its rights deprives preaching of its mystic element.

Our relationship with Unitarian and other Liberal movements is undeniable. The interpretation of Baptism which Faustus Socinus, that wonderful mind, defended almost hopelessly and

saw at last accepted by the Synod of Rakov in 1603, is in its main points identical with ours. The Preface of the Rakov Confession expresses no less exactly our conception of the character of a confession as being an individual utterance of our best selves. Mennonitism claims the same glory as Unitarianism,—to be based not upon a dogmatic creed, but upon the principle of religious freedom and the open trust.

As we appreciate the opinions of those who think differently, we are ready to come to an understanding with like-minded brethren. Hence our frequent co-operation with Remonstrants in early times, with Remonstrants, Lutherans, and some sections of the 'Protestantenbond' at present. Early in the eighteenth century, and nowadays in many congregations, members are accepted without new ceremonies, by simple enrolment on attestation.

Our principles are no longer our private property in Holland. I rejoice in the fact that they are now widely adopted. Our conceptions are gaining ground. The obligatory oath to which we strongly objected and from which we were at last exempted, is now being undermined; capital punishment, always a crying atrocity in our eyes, against which we pleaded in vain for three centuries, has been abolished in Holland. War—the destroyer of prosperity and mutual trust and of so many ideals of mankind—to which we oppose our principle of defencelessness, is sure to follow in the same way.

The future, we believe, will justify our aims;

and though our name may not be connected with the victory of our ideals, we may work on with a thankful heart, believing in the usefulness and perpetuity of our free congregations, trusting that, amongst numerous other religious thinkers and workers, we too are doing something to hasten the coming of the Kingdom of God.

THE FREE RELIGIOUS CONGREGATIONS OF GERMANY.

BY DR. C. SCHIELER, KOENIGSBERG, PRUSSIA.

IT is a great honour and pleasure for me to be allowed to speak in this illustrious meeting of representatives from many countries of the world as a delegate of the Free Religious Congregation at Koenigsberg in Prussia, and to explain what the Free Religious Congregations of Germany are, what their aim is, and how they are treated by the dominant Churches and by the State.

But, first, it will be best to tell you that I have belonged to the Free Religious Movement only for five years. Before that time I was a professor of theology at an Episcopal College in Germany ; but vexed by doubts about the Catholic doctrines, and tired of the spiritual tyranny and restraints upon conscience, I left the Catholic Church with its destructive ultramontaniam, and turned to the free and true Gospel of Jesus Christ. Now I know what liberty of inquiry is in religious questions, and acknowledge that true religion can prosper only on the basis of religious liberty. Now I know by experience the

full meaning of the word of our great Master, Jesus Christ : ‘ *Ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.*’ At present I am working as a preacher for two Free Religious Congregations, at Koenigsberg and Tilsit, and have had many opportunities of meeting people who are striving most earnestly for religious knowledge and moral perfection, who are leading a moral and religious life, such as formerly I seldom found.

The Free Religious Congregation at Koenigsberg, the city of Kant the great philosopher, was the first of all the Free Religious Congregations in Germany. The father and author of that movement in the Evangelical Church of Germany (*Evangelische Landeskirche*), which is a State Church (*Staatskirche*), was Dr. Julius Rupp, a man of an excellent philosophical and theological education and of great virtue, whose many publications are even yet, many years after his death, highly esteemed. Because he had preached in the *Schlosskirche* at Koenigsberg against the use of the old confessions of faith, especially the Athanasian (*Quicumque vult salvus esse ante omnia opus est, ut teneat catholicam fidem*), he was dismissed by a judgment of the Consistory ; but his very numerous friends and scholars stood faithfully by the celebrated preacher and teacher, and founded a free religious congregation, which they named *Freie Evangelische Gemeinde*. This was in the year 1846.

Soon afterwards free religious congregations were founded in other cities of Germany : in Magdeburg

by Uhlich, in Halle on the Saale by Wislicenus, in Nordhausen by Baltzer and others. Two years later there was a similar movement in the Roman Catholic Church, a *Los-von-Rom Bewegung* of that time, named *Deutsch-Katholische Bewegung*, of which Ronge and Czerski were the leaders, with other Catholic priests who left the Church. The religious communities founded by these men were named *Christ-Katholische* or *Apostolische* or *Deutsch-Katholische Gemeinden*, and were subsequently united with the free evangelical communities.

The history of our Free Religious Congregation is a history of persecution and sufferings, in part a history of passion. The first preacher, Dr. Rupp, and the members of the congregation, were persecuted for many years by Church and State. Dr. Rupp was several times imprisoned because he was more obedient to his conscience than to the laws of the State; the religious services were watched by policemen and more than once dissolved; even private assemblies of members of the congregation in their houses were broken up by policemen. In the year 1851 the church was closed by the head of the police at Königsberg. After many troubles of various kinds the position of the congregation began to improve under the regency of the Prince of Prussia, afterwards the German Emperor William I. Now the congregation is at liberty to celebrate its divine services and to keep its festivals, but in defiance of the Constitution. The members are not treated with impartiality by the officers of the State, and are

despised and looked upon as heathens and infidels by officers of the Church, against the words and example of Jesus Christ.

Our congregation aims at advancing the moral and religious life, on the ground of moral and religious liberty. We have no confessions of faith and do not prescribe any dogmas for the acceptance of our members. For free spontaneousness in all religious questions is the first and most important principle of our congregation. Everybody is expected and urged to further and to refine and to perfect his religious knowledge and to order his moral life according to his religious convictions. We are therefore Liberal Religious Thinkers and Workers: we do not want to be free from religion; but we are free from any constraint in religious questions and in religious life, and want to possess and to promote a good and true religion; therefore we do not believe that religion is morality only; morality is the best fruit of religion; but morality must always be joined with religion.

We esteem the Gospel highly, because it contains the doctrines of the greatest teacher of mankind, Jesus Christ; but we also respect the results of modern biblical inquiry and criticism. And we pay attention to the results of other sciences as they concern religion. We test them and utilize them for the formation of our religious convictions, and we can do so, because we are free from dogmas and confessions of faith.

We are not members of a Church; we have no

pope or bishop or priest ; we are a free association of liberal thinkers and workers like the first associations of Christians established and governed by the Apostles in the earliest age of Christianity. Our aim is to erect the kingdom of God preached by Jesus Christ, the free kingdom of free children of God.

And I believe that such free religious congregations are now of great importance and are greatly needed in our country, because thousands of people of all ranks and conditions, of the learned and of the unlearned, do not care for the church and the life of the church ; they even despise their church, because it adheres to obsolete doctrines, proved to be false by the results of scientific investigation, and compels the people to believe such doctrines, which they must reject in their own minds. Thus I have often heard it said : ' The preachers of the church teach doctrines which they do not believe ; they teach so because they are obliged to speak so.' And that is a terrible situation.

In accordance with the commandment of our Saviour Jesus Christ and his own venerated example, we consider and love one another as brothers and sisters, and give both spiritual and material help to one another as much as possible ; and, according to the same commandment, we love our neighbour as ourselves.

Therefore I was very glad to read in the invitation to this meeting : ' In the best possible way the meetings of the International Council will be fraternal, not sectarian. We will erect no walls of separation

not already existing. We will aim to ignore them all, while emphasizing the great commandment: Love to God and Love to Man.' That is the same aim that I strive after with my friends in Koenigsberg; and many religiously-minded people in Germany also are animated by the same ideals. And I can assure you that I shall work with might and main that this glorious aim may be accomplished by ourselves or by our descendants.

But, how is that very difficult work to be done? I think there is no other way than by perfect liberty of religious conviction and of the religious life—and, if possible, the perfect observance of that commandment of our Master: 'Thou shalt love the Lord thy God, and thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.'

Thus, you see, we have made for ourselves an open way to God by many and great sacrifices, and I believe that we shall have to sacrifice and suffer more in the future. But we are happy now in the possession of religious liberty, liberty of mind and spirit. And you must see, I think, that we are at one with you,—that we are working with you, united with you, by the same principles, by the same love, striving together with you towards the same end. And if there are some who want to have a Church, I accept a word I have heard here: 'The only church of the future is the church of religious liberty and of humanity.'



Rev. KRISTOFER JANSON.

THE UNITARIAN MOVEMENT IN SCANDINAVIA.¹

MR. KRISTOFER JANSON was educated for the Lutheran Church, having prosecuted his studies at the University of Christiania. He did not, however, enter the ministry of the State Church, but devoted himself to teaching in the High Schools. He also engaged in literary work, and published several novels, dramas, and poems. In 1876, the Norwegian Parliament voted him a salary of 1,600 crowns a year, in recognition of his literary attainments.

While engaged as a teacher in the people's High School, Mr. Janson happened to read a book by the Swedish poet and scientist, Victor Rydberg, on 'What the Bible teaches about Christ,' and this book quite altered his opinions on several theological questions. The book contained an exposition of Unitarian principles, and defended them on Biblical grounds so earnestly and convincingly, that Mr. Janson found it impossible to refute the arguments. About the same time, he read Dr. Albert Réville's

¹ This paper was compiled from a manuscript prepared by the Rev. Kristofer Janson, of Christiania.—ED.

'Life of Theodore Parker, with Extracts from his Sermons.' This book opened out new views for him, and he felt that, if he could embrace those views and propagate them in his own land, he would be a happy man and his countrymen a happy people. But to get an audience for such religious ideas was at that time impossible in Norway.

So Mr. Janson sailed for America. He wanted to see Theodore Parker's fatherland, and to make a fuller acquaintance with the Unitarian faith. He also desired to study the condition of his countrymen throughout the Western States. From September, 1879, until September, 1880, he travelled among the largest Norwegian settlements; he delivered a great many lectures, and was received with enthusiasm. But with regard to the religious condition of his people, he found that the Lutheran Church of America, which had split into five sects on account of doctrinal controversies, was more fanatical and conservative than its sister church in Norway. During his travels Mr. Janson studied Unitarian literature. When at Chicago, he attended a great meeting in honour of William Ellery Channing, where not only Unitarians, but Baptists, Methodists, Episcopalians, Presbyterians, and others united in praising the blessed influence of Dr. Channing, in spite of their divergencies in theological belief. This display of Christian toleration was quite new to him. Mr. Janson returned home to Norway; but soon afterwards he received a letter from America, asking him to come back and preach liberal views to a

number of his countrymen, at Minneapolis, Minn. The secretary of the Western Unitarian Conference, the Rev. Jenkin Lloyd Jones, promised the assistance of the American Unitarian Association.

Mr. Janson returned to America, and called together a mass meeting, in a large hall in Minneapolis. Fifteen hundred attended. He laid before them the principles of Unitarian Christianity, and gave his reasons for holding such views. He asked those who shared his opinions to give their names at the close of the service. The people dispersed, and Mr. Janson waited in vain for his future congregation. At last, an elderly woman entered with a book in her hand. It was the Lutheran Catechism. 'Do you intend to teach other things than those contained in this book?' she asked. Mr. Janson told her that the book was excellent in many ways, but that there were some opinions in which he did not quite agree with Luther. 'Then I will ask God to curse you, and all your work in this city,' she cried, and proudly made her exit.

That was the beginning of the Scandinavian Unitarian movement. Before Mr. Janson left the United States, in 1893, he had one congregation at Minneapolis, another at St. Paul, a third at Brown Co., a fourth at Underwood, and a fifth at Hudson, Wisc. At three places church buildings were erected, and at the fourth a plainer house of worship.

These results would have been impossible, if the American Association had not so vigorously and generously assisted the movement. By their aid

Mr. Janson's religious books were printed and distributed, including a hymn book, a treatise, 'Is Orthodoxy right?' a collection of sermons, 'Light and Freedom,' 'Songs of Jesus,' and a monthly magazine, 'The Sower,' which lived seven years in America, and then three years in Norway. Mr. Janson had been ordained a Unitarian minister at Chicago on November 25th, 1882.

After twelve years absence, he felt a desire again to see his native land, and try if the ears of the people were now open to more rational views of religion. He delivered lectures on 'What intelligent Young People now demand of Religion,' in the cities and in many of the villages. Everywhere he was received with enthusiasm. Of course there was opposition. Fanatical newspaper articles appeared, in which he was called anti-Christ, and people were told that they would go to hell if they listened to such a heretic. But the curiosity of the people was too great. People came, and the watchmen of Zion comforted each other in the hope that Mr. Janson would soon go back to America.

The welcome he received was quite a surprise to Mr. Janson. At some places the applause was quite demonstrative. It showed him that many people were no longer satisfied with the old doctrines. At a mass meeting in the capital, he closed his sermon by saying: 'And now, I do not know, friends, what to do,—whether to go back to America or remain here, and try to preach a liberal gospel.' And the whole audience cried, 'Stay with us! Stay with us!'

That call decided Mr. Janson. Since that time he has worked in his native land, with Christiania as his centre. His work in America is continued by Mr. Norman and Mr. Haugerud, Norwegians who graduated at the Meadville Theological School, and by Mr. Erichsen, formerly a Methodist minister.

But when the news spread that Mr. Janson intended to remain and preach his heresy, the pulpits and the newspapers made a violent attack upon him. His name became an object of fear, and though the opposition in later years has abated, he still experiences some difficulty in carrying on his work.

Mr. Janson founded a congregation at Christiania, consisting mostly of working men and mechanics. The number of actual members was not large, but his audience on Sundays sometimes reached from 700 to 800. Now, the question arose, whether Unitarians were included in the law relating to Dissenters or not. The words of the law are :— 'Dissenters, wherewith in this present law is understood persons who profess the *Christian* religion without being members of the State Church.' And in a later paragraph :— 'This law also includes members of the *Mosaic* faith.'

The question, laid before the church department of the State, was whether Unitarians were recognized as *Christian* Dissenters. This was answered in the negative, because they did not believe in the deity of Christ. The little Unitarian flock then sent to the Parliament in the year 1897 a proposal that the words of the first paragraph should read :

'Dissenters, wherewith in this present law is understood persons, who profess the Christian religion—*herein also included Unitarians.*' Or as another alternative:—'This law includes members of the Mosaic faith, *as well as Unitarians.*'

The last alternative was adopted, and Unitarians are now in Norway recognized as a tolerated sect, protected by the law, permitted to perform their church rites according to their own beliefs, but they are *not recognized as Christians*. It is ridiculous that we are denied the Christian name, especially when our statutes declare, that 'We would try to preach the principles of Jesus and live up to them,' and our watchword is: 'Yearning for truth, and in the spirit of Jesus we unite in order to serve God by serving and loving mankind.'

But the place alongside the countrymen of Jesus is also a good place. In the neighbouring countries of Denmark and Sweden, Unitarians are not recognized at all. In the latter country they have tried several times to obtain public recognition, but in vain.

What attitude does the mass of the public take towards the Unitarian gospel? It is the same here as in most other places: there are more Unitarians inside the orthodox churches than outside, for people do not care to break with the State Church and thereby deprive themselves of many civil rights and social advantages, and so they remain inside the old church. Others—and those the more intelligent and refined—have lost all interest in religion,

because the form in which religion is offered to them seems childish and harsh, and because the church has closed its gates against free investigation.

The people who have nothing to risk by joining a new religious society are the middle classes, and they are eager to listen to the new gospel. Mr. Janson's experience both in America and at home is, that the first-comers are the radicals, who enjoy the denunciation of the old dogmas. But when they discover that the Unitarian gospel is to build up and not only to tear down, and that it places a greater responsibility upon them and demands a pure life, that it is not only an ethical but a religious movement, then many of them leave. This was also one of the reasons why Mr. Janson resigned his position as official minister: the radical wing of his congregation tried to turn the movement into an ethical society. Besides preaching on Sunday morning, Mr. Janson gave literary readings on Sunday evenings, mostly from the rich dramatic literature of Norway. He has also delivered religious lectures in Sweden and Denmark, and friends in both lands have aided him in performing his work.

In Sweden the soil ought to be more prepared for Unitarianism, because the works of Dr. Channing and Theodore Parker have been translated into Swedish, and native authors have taught liberal views, such as Victor Rydberg and Nils Lilja. There are also a number of young theologians,

very intelligent and able men, who have joined the liberal wing of the orthodox church in Germany, led by Ritschl, Harnack, and others. But the majority of the ruling clergy in Sweden are very conservative, and it is much more difficult to promote reform there than in the more democratic country of Norway.

In Denmark, Mr Janson also has lectured in Copenhagen. A former minister of the State Church, Uffe Birkedal, holds Unitarian services there every Sunday forenoon. Nevertheless, neither he nor the members of his little society have officially broken with the State Church, and they have not yet asked for recognition as Unitarians. Their organ, called 'Light for the Land,' edited by Theo. Berg, is published fortnightly. Another young minister, Anton Jensen, has been forced to resign his position in the State Church on account of the protest against the doctrine of an eternal hell. It is said that he will try to form a free congregation for the support and spread of a liberal gospel. Mr. Janson himself spends his summers in Denmark, in the neighbourhood of Aarhus, Jutland, and preaches to an audience in the city of 150 to 200 every Sunday.

In Norway of late years some University Extension work has been started, and Mr. Janson is very much sought after as a lecturer. His many travels and frequent absence from Christiania made it difficult for him to attend to his duties as a minister, and therefore he resigned his position as official

minister in 1899, and he may now be considered as a travelling missionary. Nevertheless, he keeps up his Sunday meetings as before, and his audience varies from 300 to 600 persons.

The small Unitarian body—seventy-four members in all—is now without any official minister. The president of the congregation is Mr. Gaaserud, a paper dealer in the city.

The Unitarian movement among the Scandinavians will act more as a leaven in the old churches than by the forming of new and separate churches. And anyone who understands the signs of the times will see that inside the orthodox churches there is much more liberalism now than there was twenty years ago. Some of the Lutheran ministers themselves have published books and newspaper articles which would have been considered very heretical a few years ago, especially where they protest against the old-fashioned interpretations of the Bible. They now lay more stress upon practical work than upon dogmatic belief. Liberal religious thought moves forward, inch by inch.

THE PRESENT CONDITION OF RELIGIOUS THOUGHT AND LIFE IN AUSTRALIA.

BY THE REV. R. H. LAMBLEY, M.A., MELBOURNE.

RELIGION in Australia is an imported article—that is to say, the sects and dogmas of the old world have been perpetuated in these new southern lands. Hence there is very little that is distinctly Australian in the different aspects of religious life and thought ; in most cases there is only an echo of voices that have spoken far away. The Anglican Church is, indeed, making an effort to establish a school of Australian theology, but it makes no great headway, and should it succeed, it would only be a sectarian school. The theological institutions of the country are not remarkable for their breadth, culture, or original output of men or books. The best of the men escape to Europe, and if they return at all it is with the image and superscription of Europe legibly stamped upon them. It has been said of the book trade of Australia that it exists to sell English books and periodicals ; and an unkindly critic might say, with a large measure of truth, that the churches of Australia seem specially designed to

perpetuate the divisions and 'isms' of England. But it is difficult to see how this could have been otherwise under the actual circumstances.

The modifications that are being introduced are the product of a certain mobility of thought and a readiness to make experiments of which Europe knows little, and these again may be traced to the effect of climate upon character.

There are many signs of movement within the churches that prognosticate speedy changes of a far-reaching kind. This is specially true of the Presbyterian churches. These churches have been federated, and one of the conditions of this federation was the revision of 'the secondary standards of the Church.' This is a great thing to have accomplished. But some of her most earnest members think that the Presbyterian Church is losing, if it has not already lost, its hold of the people, and is becoming more a racial church—Scotch and Irish. At present it represents a high standard of culture and of wealth, and consequently exercises great influence in the land.

The various sections of the Methodist Church have caught the spirit of the times and federated—the Act of Union will be consummated during the present year. Within their ranks also are pretty clear indications of change, and certain questions which have to be put to the ministers every year are asked with a conscious nervousness, and in such haste as scarcely to wait for an answer. The connection between them and the parent body is on the

whole loyal and real ; still it is obvious that the old traditions are weakening, and the cry for a new hymn-book. 'made in Australia,' is not without its significance. Here, as in Europe, Methodism just holds its own ; no headway is made ; two or three city centres in Victoria are very active in social work, and attract crowds to their services, but then these services are more like variety entertainments than religious worship.

The Anglican Church is mainly Evangelical ; Ritualism and Sacerdotalism are indeed known, but in a very mild form. I am not aware that there is any such thing as an Anglican Broad Church party in Australia.

There are three Unitarian churches, none of them fifty years old, and none of them flourishing. Yet the strange fact is that Unitarians are rapidly increasing in number. I believe the census just taken in Victoria will show a very considerable increase in our numbers. But this increase does not better the condition of our churches, chiefly, I think, because the population is thinly scattered over the country districts, where many of our fellow-believers live, and where it is quite impossible to build churches. There are many Unitarians in Melbourne, possibly a thousand who will so describe themselves in the census, yet less than one-tenth attend our church.

The 'Australian Church' formed in Melbourne several years ago has now some two or three branches in New South Wales. It is of local growth, and is

broad and catholic. Its founder, the Rev. Charles Strong, D.D., is a very able and energetic man who has done a great work in Melbourne. In reply to my question he writes :—‘ We have, as you know, a pretty active church, and a congregation that sometimes numbers from 800 to 1,000, drawn from all churches and no church. I find earnest listeners, kind co-operators, and unselfish workers among the poor and in other departments of church work.

‘ I know men and women who are deeply interested in religion, and not merely as a speculative matter. I could tell you of members of Parliament to whom religion is a reality, of lawyers, business men, and working-men who think, read, and feel ; and of ladies not a few who are intelligent, liberal-minded, and devout.

‘ But my impression of religious life in Victoria as a whole is not very favourable. Church life seems to be at a low ebb, and what there is is not very high. The great burning questions of the day are ignored in the Church Assemblies, and poor petty matters, comparatively, seem to engross attention. One seldom meets with interest in the real religious questions on the part of the clergy. The laity in the Church Courts show little independence or living interest beyond business details of a denominational character. The professors and teachers in the small divinity schools do not bring forth much fruit.

‘ I question if our young people know anything about theological questions, or if many of them could even tell you what Presbyterian, Unitarian,

Episcopalian, or even Roman Catholic really means. We have, as you know, a large number of Jews in Melbourne. As far as I can gather the synagogue is orthodox, and we have no reformed synagogue here.

‘I come across sceptics as to the future, and sceptics as to God and religion, but I do not know that their number is greater here than elsewhere.

‘The environment (which of course we partly make for ourselves) is not favourable to religious life and thought or to church-going and living working churches. We live in an atmosphere of excitement. To use a vulgarity, we have always “something on”—a land-boom, or a murder, or a divorce suit, or a war. We are given up to money-making and pleasure-seeking, eating, drinking, and luxury. Horse-racing and speculation and gambling are rampant. Altogether the atmosphere is depressing and unfavourable to sober-minded religious progress. The people, meanwhile, do not seem to care about anything serious. They love a fashionable concert, or a social scandal which the press serves up for them, a horse-race, a cricket or a football match, and so on ; but I question if Jesus Christ would get much of an audience.

‘Spiritualism has, I think, a good many followers, though at present one does not hear so much of it as a few years ago, and in the churches are to be found quiet believers in spiritualistic phenomena. Theosophy was for a time very prominent. I cannot tell to what extent its tenets prevail, but some of my friends are theosophists.

‘There does seem to be within the last few years a liberalising spirit at work, though it is vague. Members of different churches become more tolerant of each other, and change is going on. But there is at present no whole-hearted intelligent effort to bring the Church into harmony with the new circumstances and knowledge of to-day. All I can say is, that we seem to be *drifting*, and drifting on the whole towards change, whether for the worse or the better remains to be seen.’

Dr. Strong’s description is depressing, but its truth cannot be questioned by any one who knows the circumstances. It is said specially of Melbourne and Victoria, but is probably equally true of all the other states, although some modification would be necessary in the case of New Zealand and Tasmania.

On the whole, the outlook is not very promising ; but at any time a change for the better may set in. In the meantime, the friends of the Liberal movement must stand by their principles, and hearten each other as well as they can ; and, above all, labour to bring about a revival of true religion.

THE THOUGHTS AND EXPERIENCES OF
A LIBERAL RELIGIOUS THINKER AND
WORKER IN RUSSIA.

BY MR. VLADIMIR TCHERTKOFF.

HAVING availed myself of what I feel to be the great privilege so kindly offered me of addressing this meeting, I should like first of all to state why it is that I have the deepest sympathy, respect, and admiration for the work which is being accomplished for humanity by the so-called Unitarian movement. Being expected, as I understand, to communicate something about my personal life, I should, however, wish to allude to myself only in so far as my own experience has brought me in contact with the great cause of rational religion which has united us here on this occasion.

Brought up in the conventional orthodox creed of my country, as many of those present probably were in theirs, I felt, while yet almost a youth, the imperative necessity of carefully testing the authority upon which were based the beliefs inculcated into me from infancy. This, naturally, very soon



Mr. VLADIMIR TCHERTKOFF.

elicited misgivings as to the reliableness of the miraculous and dogmatic element, until then inseparably interwoven in my mind with the true religious spirit. This true spirit I valued so highly that I felt an inexpressible dread merely at the thought of the possibility of having to give it up should the external authority I was questioning prove untenable. Only those who in complete solitude have themselves struggled through this period of doubt and search can, I think, form any adequate idea of the mental and spiritual anguish one suffers when, one by one, all the supports upon which one's relation to the Eternal seemed to have been built are shattered by the merciless logic of one's reason, when all firm ground seems to disappear from under one's feet, and one feels oneself being hurled into an abyss of darkness and despair.

My mental sufferings were increased by yet another class of most disturbing doubts, which arose in my mind at that same period. Being then an officer of the Imperial Guards, my social activity drew me into direct participation in the evils of the existing State organization; but the ethical aspect of Christ's teaching, which had always had a deep attraction for me, was by degrees disclosing itself more and more clearly to my understanding, and at last I got a glimpse of the practical consequences bound to ensue, if men did indeed apply in their relations to one another the principle of love and brotherhood, in the simple and direct sense expressed in the teach-

ing, the life and the death of Jesus. And this glimpse was sufficient to reveal to me how completely the life I was leading, as well as that of those around me, and, as far as I then knew, of all humanity—was contradicting Christ's Christianity. It appeared to me that mankind, although outwardly so ostentatiously exalting his teaching, not only refrained from practically realizing it, but did not even theoretically recognize its true meaning. This observation, which was not shared by anyone around me, nor by anyone I then knew of, engendered in my mind the fear that I was losing my senses; for could it possibly be that of all men living, and who had lived for the last 1800 years, I was the only one to understand Christ correctly?

These two insurmountable—as they appeared to me—and yet unremovable difficulties utterly deprived me of all peace, haunting me day and night, until I indeed felt as if I was going mad. But the same power of truth which propelled me into this investigation eventually brought me safely through the abyss, as it is sure to do with every human soul in the same position, provided it be the truth,—the truth only, and the truth at any cost,—which is being sought. And when I at last again saw the light and rested my feet on firm ground, together with the peace of mind I attained, I also had the joy of learning that I was not alone, but that there had been, and were, many men who had gone through similar experiences and been brought to the same conclusions.

As to what precisely these conclusions were I need not spend words to explain, for it will be sufficient to mention that my first or 'abstract' difficulty was solved on lines which, as I have since learnt, Unitarian thinkers have as a body examined and expressed in the most conscientious, able, and exhaustive manner. And my second or 'practical' difficulty brought me to that understanding of the application of Christ's teaching to conduct which has been so clearly and so widely propagated of late years in the writings of Leo Tolstoy. Close personal friendship with him, the study of Unitarian and kindred literature, as well as intercourse with many minds advancing in the same direction, have, since I passed through my previous spiritual crisis, been of invaluable help to me in the further development of my consciousness. And having myself experienced the agonizing ordeal of extricating oneself, without any human help, from the religious errors one has been brought up in, I naturally feel a deep desire to contribute, as far as in me lies, to the popularization amongst my fellow-men of what has already been attained in this respect by the best representatives of liberal religious thought.

In Russia, chiefly owing to the Governmental and orthodox censorship of printed books, we are unfortunately altogether bereft of published literature presenting a free and rational investigation of religious matters; whereas, on the other hand, pseudo-scientific works of the purely materialistic

school of thought enjoy a large circulation amongst the more educated classes. Consequently those who, not satisfied with the coarsely superstitious form of Religion offered by the Orthodox Greek Church search for further enlightenment, find in Russian literature no help towards a more rational Religion, and generally either fall head foremost into the opposite extreme, *i.e.*, into the equally groundless and dogmatical superstition of Atheism, or else fall back upon the primitive theology of the Church, concluding that reason and faith cannot possibly be reconciled, and that, therefore, the more illogical and senseless one's religion is, the likelier it is to be true, there being in it greater scope for faith and less danger of intrusion on the part of the carnal intellect—a point of view which, as we all know, is not limited to any one country or group of believers.

Being at the present time in England, occupied with publishing in Russian and introducing into my country books printed irrespective of the Governmental censorship, I have included in these editions a series of works representing that rational attitude towards religious truths which is so powerfully developed in Unitarian literature. And I may here mention that it is with a feeling of deep gratitude and joy I have accepted some valuable help most kindly afforded me for this purpose by the British and Foreign Unitarian Association.

These publications will, I am quite certain, prove

exceedingly useful in the cause of true religious enlightenment in Russia. And not only will the educated classes profit by them, but also the peasants and working-men.

The average Russian peasant, owing to the Government's compulsory demands of conformity with the Church, and to the hypnotic influence of Church ceremonies, has a kind of idolatrous awe of those rites, images, relics, etc., which form the essential part of public worship in the Established Church, although during the last thirty years or so he is becoming much more indifferent to this formal, conventional, and grossly superstitious mode of worship. On the other hand, he has always had a deep sense of the true spirit of Christianity, and in his patient, forbearing, good-natured and industrious life offers for the most part a remarkable example of its practical realization.

The contrast between his relations to the idolatrous Church theology artificially inculcated into him by the Government, and to the true Christian ideal, is graphically manifested in the ancient Russian national proverbs on these subjects, in which the priests are always treated with disdain and contempt, whereas the Spirit of God and the teaching of Christ are invariably alluded to with the greatest reverence and approbation ; and the sense of man's complete dependence upon the Higher Power is most touchingly insisted upon.

The moment the Russian peasant has the leisure and opportunity to think for himself, he inevitably

assumes a critical attitude towards the stale dogmas and senseless ritual of the official Church, and practically becomes what is termed a 'Sectarian,' but which really is a return to a purer and truer conception of the Christian teaching. Many 'sects' of the most various kinds have thus developed in Russia, corresponding to the different character of religious aspirations and external influences. At one time what is in England known as 'Evangelical' propaganda was very active among the Russian working-classes, owing in a great measure to influence from abroad. But of late a deeper and more independent development in the direction of a rational attitude towards religious questions has been pronouncing itself. It is most interesting and at times heart-rending to witness with what effort and difficulty individual peasant thinkers of this latter category, in their endeavours to extricate themselves from the traditional orthodox distortions of religious conceptions, have, quite alone, without any scientific culture, and merely by the help of their natural common sense, to travel over the whole of the controversial ground which sometimes offers such perplexing obstacles even to those of us who have had the advantage of profiting by the highest enlightenment attained by the collective human mind.

In this connection it is a characteristic fact that a community of so-called 'sectarians,' known under the name of 'Doukhobors' (at present living in Canada), almost entirely illiterate, acquainted with

the Christian teaching exclusively through oral tradition, and having up to quite lately possessed neither Bible nor Gospel in written form—that this religious community is in comparison with all other Russian ‘sects’ endowed with the deepest spiritual insight into the Christian truth, and with a discernment of religious problems not always enjoyed by those who approach these problems through the medium of the written Book, where the dead letter is so apt to extinguish the living substance. It should also be remarked that it is these same ‘Doukhobors’—the most rational of religious communities—who are at the same time the most fearless, straightforward, and consistent in the practical realization in their conduct of the teaching of Christ, at times effecting in their individual and social life the nearest approach to the kingdom of God which has yet been attained on earth.

This group, however, forms a solitary exception in its complete freedom from all theological trammels, and the more fortunate they may appear to us in this respect, the greater sympathy and help do those other seekers after truth among the Russian people, who do not enjoy these great advantages, deserve on our part. It is, of course, impossible in the space of a few minutes to give, even in outline, any adequate idea of the position of progressive religious thought in Russia at the present time. And if I have allowed myself to touch at all upon this subject, it has been merely to

emphasize the fact, that acquaintance with the results of Unitarian research and thought would, at the present juncture, afford the more advanced sections of the Russian people the greatest possible help in their efforts to extricate themselves from formal dogma and superstitious theology, without at the same time surrendering their hold upon what they feel to be really valuable and essential in Religion, which many Atheist agitators would be so glad to see them do.

I would like to conclude by giving expression to a few thoughts which fill my mind in connection with the desirable further development of the bright and hopeful religious movement we are all participating in, each in his own particular way. We all, I trust, agree that a movement of this kind, if it be indeed vital, is essentially progressive; and that, therefore, it is destined to achieve in the unlimited future a yet greater degree of progress than has been attained in the past. Our object, consequently, on such occasions as the present one, I assume should not be restricted merely to the contemplation of the advantages already realized, which in itself undoubtedly affords a most lawful satisfaction and encouragement; but our eyes should also be directed towards the goal which has yet to be approached. And for this purpose it is well that we should not only congratulate one another on the merits and successes of the cause uniting us, but should also mutually unburden our sense of the shortcomings and inconsistencies, which it seems desirable in the future to overcome.

By whatever names we may designate our views—whether we call ourselves Christians or Atheists, Socialists or Anarchists, Ethicists, Humanitarians, or anything else—in one thing at any rate most of us do at the present day agree, and that is in accepting the idea of universal brotherhood or the mutual solidarity of the human race. This principle is most solemnly professed at all meetings for public worship; it is brilliantly dilated upon by progressive reformers of every kind, and enthusiastically applauded by their fascinated audiences.

While, however, finding such soothing satisfaction in its verbal proclamation, and being so keenly desirous of impressing on others its moral obligation, do we really grasp the actual bearing of this momentous truth we are so lavish in asseverating?

If we do not merely play with words, this principle implies neither more nor less than that we should treat absolutely every human being as we would wish to be treated ourselves, and as we do treat those nearest and dearest to us. We should consequently share all we have with any one who is in need of it, as we naturally would with our brother, parent, or child, for whose welfare we are ready, if necessary, to sacrifice our all. Were our attitude towards our fellow-men really such, it is obvious that, with the extreme want and destitution surrounding us, we should very soon find ourselves surrendering the possession of all our property and reduced to the same level as our penniless neighbours.

As a matter of fact, however, we are not doing this, nor are we even desirous of becoming capable of so doing. We would shrink in terror and dismay at the very idea of the inevitable and seemingly disastrous consequences such conduct would involve for ourselves and those we love.

This being so, it is, I think, most important that we should at least have the courage to face the truth and candidly recognize our glaring inconsistency, however humiliating and painful such a confession may be to us. Indeed, the more uncomfortable and miserable we may in consequence become the better will it be, seeing that progress is possible only in so far as one is dissatisfied with one's present condition.

Should this consciousness of having so much to develop and reform in ourselves somewhat suppress the fervour of our efforts at improving others, we need not be cast down, for the more genuine earnestness and the less self-deception and cant will there be ; and what may appear to be lost in the scope of our social activity will assuredly be gained in the sincerity of our motives and the intensity of our action.

And it is this, after all, which is the most essential : the intrinsic value, as well as the influence for good of our lives, ultimately depending not so much on what we *preach* as on what we *are*.

It is, of course, unnecessary to add that were

we to develop in ourselves this Christian attitude towards all our fellow-men, as towards our nearest relatives, prisons and workhouses, law courts and gallows, armies and police, class privileges and capitalistic advantages, individual ownership of land and of the instruments of production, and all other iniquities of the kind, would vanish from our lives, together with the injustice, suffering, misery and hatred they represent and produce; for we would become as incapable of participating in these evils in relation to any one as we now are of introducing them into the circle of our families.

In the time of the abolition of slavery in America, if I am rightly informed, it was some of the members of the Unitarian Church who were almost the only representatives of any religious body who had the courage and sincerity to stand out in favour of the oppressed race. And now that the time has come for the liberation of the working masses from the not less atrocious economical and political slavery of our days, is it too much to desire and to hope that the representatives of modern Unitarianism will act up to the high social standard they so gloriously attained in the past? At all events, it is certainly the sacred duty of every individual who accepts Christ as his master, and wishes to be true to his spirit, to study, appreciate and support that progressive humanitarian movement which is now so universally and authoritatively manifesting itself in the

various branches of advanced reform. It would indeed be sad and humiliating were the spirit of Christ's teaching to be imperceptibly transferred from his acknowledged followers to those who nominally repudiate him, but in practice are the most active promulgators of right and just relations between men ; and were we, who profess the Christian ideal, to find ourselves merely conquerors of abstract theological error, cut off from participation in the practical social progress of mankind.

Approach towards unity is the direction which all true mental and spiritual progress of mankind inevitably takes. Unity is the ideal which one naturally more especially associates with the particular movement which has accepted the designation of Unitarian, if this term be understood in its larger meaning. Unitarianism has in the past rendered humanity so enormous a service towards the unification of religion by liberating universal truth from the net of irrational and mutually antagonistic superstitions it was entangled in, that one naturally longs to see Unitarianism in the future render in the domain of feeling the same service it has hitherto rendered in the sphere of reason, by participation in the levelling of all those egotistical barriers which prevent men from behaving towards other men as the children of one heavenly Father inevitably would, if only they did indeed realize the brotherhood which unites them.

Thanking this assembly of fellow-men and fellow-seekers after truth for having allowed me to express

myself, I earnestly hope that no one will deem it out of place that speaking in a country which enjoys complete freedom of speech, and addressing a religious body distinguished, above all others, by the independence of thought it encourages, I have allowed myself frankly to give vent to that which was uppermost in my mind on the present occasion.

RELIGION AND EMPIRE.

BY MR. GRAHAM WALLAS, M.A., LONDON.

IN order to save time, I shall begin not with elaborating arguments, but with laying down assumptions. I shall assume that the present movement of the world is towards the formation not of nations, but of empires; that the nations of European origin, which were consolidated from one hundred to fifty years ago, are now gathering round them bodies of dependent peoples, in many cases greatly out-numbering themselves; but without either political rights or the prospect of assimilation by inter-marriage. I shall assume that that process is separate from, though it is in a certain sense connected with, the tendency among the nations to quarrel among themselves about the control of the subject races. For instance, in South Africa, the question of the relation of the white man and the black man is entirely different from the question as to who shall be the white man. Then I shall further assume; that this process is no longer due to the unauthorized acts of the individual explorers or missionaries—into the results of whose work the nation at home

used somewhat unwillingly to enter—but that since the first partition of Africa, sixteen years ago, it is the result of the deliberate action of the Great Powers, and of their responsible Governments. I shall finally assume that the cause which has brought this about, and which is every day accelerating the process, is the enormous improvement in the means of communication on the surface of the globe, and that we are to expect that this process will develop on its economic side until the world is organized economically as one place ; that is to say, until the production and distribution of goods on the earth is carried on by one system, though under various forms of Imperial control.

Now, this process has within the last few months given rise in Germany to a word which I believe will be used all over the world before very long—I mean the word ‘world-politics.’ And my purpose, in speaking to-day, is to ask you whether there exists at this moment a ‘world-ethic,’ a moral conception of the world-relations, corresponding to the new world-politics. I think it is almost impossible to answer ‘yes,’ to that question. If I asked the English men and women in this room, and still more, perhaps, if I asked the Germans, the Icelanders, the Dutch, the Hindoos, the French, in this room—if I asked them, what is the moral relationship between the weaker races in the great empires and the stronger races—not what their relation is, but what it ought to be, I should receive a curiously inconsistent series of connected answers. We English

might all admit that the relation between ourselves and the Australian blacks should be different from our relation with the Kaffirs in Africa ; and further, we might wonder whether we have any right founded upon superior civilization, or upon anything else, for the existence of our Indian Empire ; but we should agree on no positive and general conception.

Now, if I had been speaking in this room to an audience drawn from the same sources fifty or sixty years ago, I should have then expected to find such an agreement on a positive and general principle. We should have been living just at the most triumphant moment of that great Christian and humanitarian movement which first destroyed the slave trade, and then—having abolished slavery throughout the British Empire—by a still more heroic effort abolished it in the States of North America ; and which finally enfranchised the American negroes, and made them equal citizens with their late masters. That movement was not confined to the Churches. It is one of the very few instances where an agitation, originating in a few despised and extreme religious men, succeeded in guiding the policy of at least two great nations throughout a whole generation.

And if you were to ask me what was the last occasion on which the British Parliament laid down any principle whatsoever as to the relation between the stronger and weaker races in the British Empire, I should have to go back to the year which followed the abolition of slavery, to the resolution passed by

the House of Commons in 1834. In that year, the House of Commons unanimously resolved :—

‘That His Majesty’s Commons are deeply impressed with the duty of affording to the native inhabitants of the colonial settlements, protection in the enjoyment of their civil rights, and of imparting to them that degree of civilization and that religion with which Providence has blessed this nation.’

As the result of that resolution, a Committee was formed, and the chairmanship was taken by Sir Fowell Buxton, a member of that family which has done so much for the great cause of humanity all over the world, who had with him Sir George Grey, the Colonial Secretary, and a rising young politician, Mr. William Ewart Gladstone. The Committee sat for two sessions, taking evidence largely from missionaries, and presented a report, in which they said :—

‘We are at least bound to do to the inhabitants of other lands, whether enlightened or not, as we should in similar circumstances desire to be done by.’

And they laid down that ‘the native inhabitants of any land have an incontrovertible right to their own soil.’

Now, throughout the arguments of that Committee, and the evidence of their witnesses, there runs the biological assumption, that, within a very short period of time, members of all the races in the world may be treated as being intellectually and morally, if not physically, identical. It was con-

stantly stated, that a very few years of education, following upon conversion, would make the ordinary inhabitants, say, of a South Australian village, for all spiritual, intellectual, and political purposes, identical with the inhabitants of an English village. And I remember that an Archdeacon who came from Australia, and who had had in his house some six or seven boys from one of the most degraded of the Australian tribes, declared that after three or four years they could repeat the Creed and the Catechism of the English Church with as much intelligence as the ordinary English boy in his church school at home.

That assumption, on which rested so much of the great humanitarian movements of the last century, and which was shared not only by the Christian thinkers of the time, but by many opponents of Christianity, by such a friend of education, for instance, as James Mill, is now absolutely dead. What has killed it? In the first place, the patient study of men of science. Since Darwin re-vivified biology, we have come to see that, even if we call the differences between the various races of human beings 'varieties' instead of 'spécies,' we do not make them any the less permanent. That is to say, that, speaking of the generations, the centuries, the thousands, if you like, of years with which politicians deal, it must be taken that those distinctions are actually permanent, and that, however easy it may be to say, in the words of the resolution of 1834, that it is our duty to impart to all the inhabitants of

the globe that degree of civilization to which we have attained, the question whether it is possible to do so depends upon the scientific conditions of the problem, and not upon any vote of the House of Commons. In the next place, not only have the conclusions of scientific men gradually filtered down to the non-scientific readers of the newspaper, but the improvement of the means of communication of which I have spoken has brought each one of us infinitely nearer to actual contact with the varieties of the human race in the world, than our ancestors ever could have been. Not only are we familiar from our childhood with photographs of all these races, not only do members of each race walk our streets daily, but there exists a school of vivid writers who have set themselves to bring the feelings of those who have lived among weaker races home to those who stay in England. Every one of us feels a certain superiority over the ideas of 'Paget, M.P.,' or of any other member of Parliament who has made a six weeks' tour to see India or Africa, even if we have made no tour at all. Besides, there have to be added those causes—full, I believe of immense good in the future, but, in part, destructive for the present—which have undermined the old basis of Protestant Christianity.

The effect of all this is that the conception which used to be sneered at by its enemies as the 'man and a brother' idea, instead of directing the policy of England and America, as it did, for instance, when it forced England to wait till the last moment before

annexing New Zealand, for fear that we might injure the Maories, has now absolutely disappeared from English politics ; and that in America we have seen, with hardly a word of protest, those clauses in the Constitution which enfranchised the negro and made all dependent territory a part of the United States frustrated. We see also that in England the use of the word 'rights,' in our dealings with weaker races, has gone, and that the King in his speech this year made a pointed difference between the 'equal rights' that we were told must be given to white people, and that 'protection and justice' which we must afford to the native population.

The old theory has gone, and no theory, no ethical conception whatsoever of the problem has taken its place ; not even a working rule for dealing in the same way with populations of the same kind. It is a matter of accident within the British Empire, how a population of a given grade of intelligence shall be treated. In the Soudan, for instance, we treat black tribes according to traditions derived from India—traditions which prevent those who govern from getting for themselves the coarser forms of personal profit. Those traditions have been elaborated, first by the genius of Burke, and then by the example of many of the heroes of Anglo-Indian statesmanship. In India and in the Soudan, whether arrogantly or not, whether sympathetically or not, whether wisely or not, at any rate the native people are governed for their own sakes by men who are not permitted to own a single acre of land, or a

single share in a company, and are governed largely in accordance with native ideas. Go south from the Soudan, and you come to British East Africa, where again, I am thankful to say, the British East Africa Company has become bankrupt, and the Home Government, with its Indian traditions, has entered into possession. But sail down one long lake from the south of British East Africa, and you will arrive at the northernmost extension of South Africa. There, no native is allowed, in practice, to own a yard of land. The government is carried on by men, whose first qualification is that they are shareholders in a trading company. Almost all government is carried on, indeed, throughout South Africa, whether English or Portuguese or Dutch, for the white man, and according to his own ideas, and for his own profit only. Now, such an accidental collocation of completely different methods and ideas within one Empire cannot permanently exist. Sooner or later, we shall have to face the alternative which the States of North America faced in the sixties, that either the federation which binds us together must be broken, or the local rights, which we call 'self-government,' must cease in those countries where the huge majority are enslaved. It will be impossible for two diametrically opposite ethical conceptions to live in one State.

Nothing, again, could be more pitiful, and nothing, in a sense, could be more salutary, than the ludicrous helplessness of the great Christian Powers who are now encamped inside and outside

Peking. Ask them why they are there, and what they are going to do, and what good thing is going to come from it all—the Germans stand there helpless, while the Social Democrats mock them; and the Americans, while Mark Twain makes them a hissing and a scorn. It is easy for men to speak of themselves as practical politicians, and to despise philosophy and ethics and religion as unpractical; but the present state of things in China is the clearest possible proof, that the civilized world cannot possibly exist without ethical conceptions. As it is, the intellect of the statesmen who are engaged in the Chinese affair is only capable of a feeble imitation of that saying of Bismarck's—which sounded so wise, and was so shallow—that he himself, in international matters, cared only for national interests,—a phrase that Mr. Chamberlain has made his own. To see the representatives of the Great Powers sitting round a table, and saying one to another, 'I only care for the interests of my country,' is to receive a living proof, that we are at the beginning and not at the end of the problem.

But it is not enough to say, we have no world-ethic now. We must also ask, what chance there is of such an ethical conception coming to us and being accepted by the nations who, for the moment, are responsible for the Imperial organization of our globe—a conception that men shall not only believe, but also obey. In asking this, we must satisfy ourselves by no easy optimism. Even from ^{the}our own selfish point of view, we must remember that the

attempt to solve the Imperial problem on the basis of national selfishness may lead to a universal welter of Imperial wars, and that is too serious a matter to be smoothed over.

Can Christianity give us the light we need? The Christian religion, in its hundred forms, has one advantage, that it is in possession of those races who, for the moment, have to do the thinking for the world-movement. Not only is it in possession at home ; but there is a great army of Christian missionaries abroad, living in the presence of the non-white races, and, one hopes, trying to bring the Christian religion into touch with the actual problems as they see them. And Christianity in the past has shown itself capable of adaptation to new problems which were not in the minds of its original founders.

But if I had to answer the question myself, I am afraid that I do not—trying to look coldly and impartially at the conditions of the problem—expect that from Christianity there will come a world-ethic which will be obeyed. It seems to me that some of the vital principles of Christianity, the surrender of which means the destruction of Christianity itself, make it more difficult for a man brought up in the atmosphere of the Christian religion than for one brought up in the atmosphere of at least one other religion, to see the problem as it is, and to face it under its new conditions. Christianity is above all things, in its history and in its origin, an anthropocentric religion—

a religion centred upon the individual soul of man. The vast majority of Christians believe that the individual soul, whether of the West Australian black, or the negro, or of a member of any race white or non-white, after a moment of life in this world, attains to immortal equality. That conception, it seems to me, is extremely easy, if Christianity is a mere theological belief about another world ; but it makes it extremely difficult for a Christian to enter into the actual conditions of a problem of which the essential element is the permanence in this world of human variations. Again, although we have spoken of Christianity this morning as being a religion of tolerance, and as being one of many religions all of which have their share of truth, Christianity, in its origin and in its development, has declared itself to be the only true religion, and has been based not upon patient observation, but upon supernatural signs and wonders. I may be wrong, but I have not disguised my thought, because it is necessary in this problem that we should face all thoughts.

If I were asked, whether there is any one of the great established religions from which it is possible that a conception of the world-problem could, in our time, come, I should look perhaps to Buddhism. Certainly, the only sane, kind, and, as it seems to me, true argument concerning the Chinese question that has been issued by the officials of any State or Church, is that which has been issued by the Buddhists of Japan. And I will add, that the only sane and kind and true thing done, in all that welter

of stupidity and cruelty, was done by the Buddhists of Japan, when they refused to take any compensation for the destruction of their sacred buildings. It seems to me, again, that Buddhism has an advantage in that it is not anthropocentric, and does not treat the universe merely as a painted back-ground before which is acted the tragedy of human life. A religion which looks on human life in its relation to a living universe, presents some possibility of overcoming the apparently instinctive hatred that divides the white and black races of mankind. Certainly, in this war in South Africa, he would be most likely to think of the Kaffirs, whose crops we are burning, who also had a thought for the hundreds of thousands of oxen and of horses which we are torturing to death.

In any case, let us hope that not only is the need of some world-ethical conception strong upon us, but that such a conception must come. A change in the conditions of human life so great as that which is involved in making the world one place, communication over which takes a second by the telegraph, and a few weeks by steam, cannot be effected without a far-reaching influence upon human imagination. As long as we could think of ourselves as being surrounded by unexplored tracts of land and ocean, the human spirit could treat war and hatred as local accidents, and plunge forward into the unknown without a sense of limitation. Now that we know the little ball on which we move as we know the streets of our native town, the possibility of our living for further generations like rats fighting

each other in a narrow pit, may be, one hopes, too dreadful for us to face. And not only must that sense of limitation come home to us, but we shall be tempted—nay, we shall be compelled—to look beyond our globe out into the great expanse of the heavens, and try to bring our human needs, our human passions, into relation with the eternities of space and time.



Rev. P. H. WICKSTEED, M.A.

WORDSWORTH'S IDEALS AND THE NINETEENTH CENTURY.

BY THE REV. PHILIP H. WICKSTEED, M.A., LONDON.

NO doubt many of my hearers have asked themselves what Wordsworth has to do with the occasion that has drawn us together. My own answer to the question rests on a deep conviction that his was the strongest and most characteristic English voice heard in the nineteenth century; that it is in his words that the conscious or unconscious ideals of England are most clearly formulated; that it is by the measure of her conformity to his demands that the success or failure, the fidelity or apostasy, of England is best to be measured. His most characteristic utterances date from the very end of the eighteenth century, or the early decades—some would say the first decade—of the nineteenth century; and it is hardly too much to say, that it was only at the end of that century that England fully realized Wordsworth, and discovered the all-penetrating and transforming influence which he had exercised upon her spiritual life during the whole of its course. In our spiritual attitude towards Nature,

our fundamental conception of human relations and our resultant social and religious ideals, we are nearer to Wordsworth than his contemporaries were. And as to our conception of the significance, the privileges, and the obligations of nationality, many of us feel that our hope lies in a return in the beginning of the twentieth century to the note struck by Wordsworth early in the nineteenth.

Nature, Society, Nationality, then, are the three great conceptions as to which I would endeavour to give some account of Wordsworth's teaching with reference to the century through which we have just passed.

Any review of the nineteenth century seems naturally to start from the French Revolution, and the critical importance of the French Revolution in Wordsworth's own development has been very generally recognized, though perhaps the full scope and nature of that influence has not always been realized. Wordsworth's life in Cumberland, at Cambridge, and in London, had given him abundance and variety of vital experience; but had not brought him to reflect on life as a whole, either in its personal or its social aspects; and though he had always taken a vivid interest in man, whether in the spaciousness and dignity of the open-air life of the dalesman—

‘A freeman, wedded to his life of hope
And hazard, and hard labour interchanged
With that majestic indolence so dear
To native man—’

or in the 'gay confusion' and the naïve self-importance and trifling of under-graduate life at the University, or in the huge mysterious massiveness of the crowded streams of humanity in London with its sense of 'Power growing under weight,' yet still his experience of man had impressed him less than his experience of Nature.

The terrific upheaval of the French Revolution, which presented him with its ready-made solutions of the problems of human existence, first raised those problems themselves into conscious prominence in his mind.

This explains why the ardour of the Revolution was so slow to take hold of him. No sense of social need had prepared him for it. But it explains also the profound and abiding nature of the influence which the French Revolution came ultimately to exercise upon him; for it had waked in him the social sense, and he owed to it not only a more or less illusory set of solutions, but his very knowledge and sense of the social problem itself. How to make 'the joy of one the joy of tens of millions' was his problem,—the contemporaneous formulating and solution of which he seemed to witness as he saw

'France standing on the top of golden hours,
And human nature seeming born again,'

when

'A homeless sound of joy was in the sky.
From hour to hour the antiquated earth
Beat like the heart of man.'

From this hour of glorious illusion—

‘ Bliss was it in that dawn to be alive,
But to be young was very Heaven ’—

there was a long and terrible awakening. Wordsworth had been lifted high above the earth into a land of imaginary supramundane glories for which, nevertheless, he seemed at the moment to have the tangible guarantee of actual earthly fact. From these heights he was dashed down. Bruised and groaning from the fall, he had to make what terms he could with the unvarnished reality of

‘ The very world, which is the world
Of all of us—the place where, in the end,
We find our happiness, or not at all.’

The demands and the problems brought to self-conscious formulation by the delirium of the French Revolution remained, but the solutions had all been swept away.

The history of the catastrophe may be read in brief dramatic consecutiveness. Europe, including England, banded against the cause of humanity as represented by the French Revolutionists, roused Wordsworth's patriotic love of his country from its slumber of unconsciousness, and it woke with a cry of sharpest anguish. Not till then did he know how every fibre of his being was rooted in his native soil. And now the sense that his country was fighting against right and truth, jarred and embittered his whole being :—

'A conflict of sensations without name,
Of which *he* only, who may love the sight
Of a village steeple, as I do, can judge
When, in the congregation bending all
To their great Father, prayers were offered up,
Or praises for our country's victories ;
And, 'mid the simple worshippers, perchance
I only, like an uninvited guest
Whom no one owned, sat silent ; shall I add,
Fed on the day of vengeance yet to come.

Oh ! much have they to account for, who would tear,
By violence, at one decisive rent,
From the best youth in England their dear pride,
Their joy, in England.'

The sense of nationality, as one of the primary possessions of humanity, thus born in agony, took its permanent place in Wordsworth's conception of life. It was his firm conviction that if France had been allowed to work out her own fate, the nobler spirits amongst the revolutionists would have guided the affairs of the nation ; but that the opposition of the European dynasties flung the power into the most reckless and unscrupulous hands. All the crimes of the blood-stained revolutionary leaders he laid to the account of Europe, and not least of England ; whilst the outward perversion of the principles of the Revolution, thus brought about, only flung him on a more passionate advocacy of their inherent power and beauty. When Robespierre fell and authority 'put on a milder face,' but the golden age still seemed as far off as ever, the poet hardened in his intellectual defence of the abstract principles which were all that was now left to him and his whole

emotional nature dried up. But to adore reason must ultimately lead to scepticism; and so it was with Wordsworth. He dragged all his moral convictions, all his emotional experiences, like criminals to the bar of reason, and finding how ill they could justify themselves there, he flung up moral questions as hopeless, and threw himself into the study of physical science, not out of love for it, but out of despair concerning all else. This was 'the crisis of the strong disease;' but when we ask for an equally dramatic exposition of Wordsworth's return to moral and emotional sanity, or of the principles on which he reconstructed his conception of life and his hopes for humanity, we are naturally baffled. For the process by which a man loses his faith, or his convictions, is usually one of intellectual analysis which can be definitely communicated, and which we can follow with intellectual realization even if it does not convince us. But the recovery of positive and vital relations with the world of Nature, of man, and of God, is to a large extent a matter of incommunicable experience; and in the case now before us, it must be gathered from the sympathetic study of the poet's whole life-work, and cannot be recorded in a few pages of his autobiography. And, indeed, the discovery of this very fact, that reason must have experience to work upon, if it is to construct anything, marks the first step in what we may call Wordsworth's recovery. He had been led to idolize reason more and more as the one and only source of conviction. Now he realized, largely under the in-

fluence of his sister Dorothy, that reason cannot create. It can only work on the material given by experience; and so the question that lies at the basis of all philosophies of life is, 'How does life impress us? how do we see and feel it?' The man who wishes permanently to affect men's conceptions of life, must enable them to see and feel life otherwise than they have hitherto done. The first question, then, that Wordsworth, beginning life again, must ask himself was the question, how this world in which we live had as a matter of fact uttered itself to him. And the first question for us to consider to-day is: What is the relation between the actual impression, sensuous and spiritual, that the external universe made upon Wordsworth, and the sense for Nature characteristic of the beginning and of the end of the nineteenth century? Fortunately, it is unnecessary to enter into detail on this subject. It is generally felt and recognized that Wordsworth, more than any other poet, felt Nature in least and in greatest, in detail and collectively, as a Divine Presence.

'Far and wide the clouds were touched,
And in their silent faces could he read
Unutterable love. Sound needed none,
Nor any voice of joy; his spirit drank
The spectacle: sensation, soul, and form
All melted into him; they swallowed up
His animal being; in them did he live,
And by them did he live; they were his life.
In such access of mind, in such high hour
Of visitation from the living God,

Thought was not ; in enjoyment it expired.
 No thanks he breathed, he proffered no request ;
 Rapt into still communion that transcends
 The imperfect offices of prayer and praise,
 His mind was a thanksgiving to the power
 That made him ; it was blessedness and love !'

And, again in *Tintern Abbey* :—

' For I have learned
 To look on Nature, not as in the hour
 Of thoughtless youth, but hearing oftentimes
 The still, sad music of humanity,
 Nor harsh, nor grating, though of ample power
 To chasten and subdue. And I have felt
 A presence that disturbs me with the joy
 Of elevated thoughts : a sense sublime
 Of something far more deeply interfused,
 Whose dwelling is the light of setting suns,
 And the round ocean and the living air,
 And the blue sky, and in the mind of man ;
 A motion and a spirit that impels
 All thinking things, all objects of all thought,
 And rolls through all things.'¹

¹ The special tone of Wordsworth's Nature-worship cannot be better illustrated than by a contrast between these well-known lines and a passage from a classical poet that corresponds to it almost word for word. Lucan's Cato, when declining to consult the oracle of Jupiter Ammon, pours contempt on the idea that God has concealed himself behind the sands of the desert, to whisper to a few pilgrims the open revelation of the Universe :—

' The seat of God is there where earth and sea and air and sky and virtue are. Why do we seek the gods beyond. Whatsoever you see, wheresoever you go, is Jupiter.'—*Pharsalia*, Bk. ix.

Note here with identity of phrase the absolute contrast of spirit. To Lucan the order of the universe is the impressive and all-present manifestation of God. To Wordsworth the beauty and the passion of Nature live and breathe, and Nature is not the universal seat of deity, but is herself the Divine Presence.

We are told by students of Wordsworth literature that though the Lyrical Ballads were received with varying praise and blame by the reviewers of the day, and were not wholly unappreciated, not one single reviewer called attention to *Tintern Abbey*; but perhaps there are no lines in English literature which answer more perfectly to the religious consciousness of the end of the nineteenth century in the presence of Nature than these. Wordsworth has given us a new sense, or, if he did not give it to us, he divined our possession of it, and woke it into consciousness.

His theology, which was orthodox enough, may have been a prejudice, an unconscious conventional conformity, or a mature and reasoned conviction; but his direct religious sense of Nature was something antecedent to reason. To communicate it to others is to awaken a potentiality into actuality, not to develop intellectual axioms into a system of thought and belief.

There was, indeed, a philosophical conception that determined much of the tone of Wordsworth's utterances as to Nature; but, after all, it affected his reflection upon his experiences rather than the vividness and intensity of the experiences themselves. The direct expression of this philosophical conception, when Wordsworth attempts it, is generally prosaic in the extreme; but its indirect flashes produce some of his sublimest poetry. Essentially it amounts to no more than this: that the fundamental problem of philosophy, the relation of the

mind of man to the world outside itself, is insoluble. Sometimes one and sometimes the other side of this relationship asserts itself exclusively. Now we are to find salvation in 'a wise passiveness,' are to understand that

'Our meddling intellect

Misshapes the beauteous forms of things,'

and are to aim only at accepting the impression of things as they are. And now we are to understand that 'imagination' is a truly creative faculty, and that the reality is nothing but what we make it. It is not in the success of his attempts to reconcile these two ideas philosophically, but in the emotional insight and harmony with which he embodies them severally or jointly that his greatness is shown. No man had a keener and healthier sense of externality than Wordsworth had, neither did any man more frequently or deeply realize that our only access to anything either material or spiritual outside ourselves is through our own internal faculties. And, in the spiritual world, every external revelation however august, every formulation of religious ideas however needful, is but an obscuration and a limitation of the primal facts of experience.

'For I must tread on shadowy ground, must sink
Deep—and, aloft ascending, breathe in worlds
To which the heaven of heavens is but a veil.
All strength—all terror, single or in bands,
That ever was put forth in personal form—
Jehovah—with his thunder, and the choir
Of shouting Angels, and the empyreal thrones—
I pass them unalarmed. Not chaos, not
The darkest pit of lowest Erebus,

Nor aught of blinder vacancy, scooped out
By help of dreams—can breed such fear and awe
As fall upon us often when we look
Into our Minds, into the Mind of Man—
My haunt and the main region of my song.'

When Wordsworth wrote these lines, his least orthodox friends were scandalized by them, and he himself hardly knew what to make of them. At the end of the nineteenth century, I read them to a friend from the Continent, whose comment was to the effect: 'I suppose they were written long ago; it does not need saying now.'

The recognition that reason can only work upon experience, and that ultimate experience is to us ultimate fact, together with his own personal experience of the emotional significance of facts, qualifies what sometimes appears like Wordsworth's hostility to science. He who was

'Contented to enjoy
What others understand,'

who denounces those who 'murder to dissect,' cannot, indeed, be held up as in any sense representing the scientific spirit of inquiry that has so profoundly characterized the latter half of the nineteenth century. But, nevertheless, Wordsworth would have been one of the comparatively few men who could thoroughly understand the late Professor Clifford's 'cosmic emotion' in its application to mathematical formulæ and conceptions. Auguste Comte and William Wordsworth join hands with each other and with Clifford in their deep sense of the emotional significance of mathematical conceptions—

'A pleasure quiet and profound, a sense
Of permanent and universal sway,
And paramount belief ;'

though I suppose of all the three, Wordsworth alone
could have added—

'There recognized
A type, for finite natures, of the one
Supreme existence, the surpassing life
Which to the boundaries of space and time,
Of melancholy space and doleful time,
Superior and incapable of change,
Nor touched by witherings of passion—is,
And hath the name of, God.'

Verily the religion of science, the devout rapture
of communion with and rest upon abstract Truth,
was not wanting in this man.

And this leads us by an easy transition to
Wordsworth's realism. He believed with unshaken
faith that to see things truly is to see them beauti-
fully, and that he who sees things truly and beauti-
fully will be spontaneously and securely virtuous.¹
Hence *duty* and *mathematics* stand in close relation
to each other²—a relation that has puzzled some of

¹ 'To console the afflicted ; to add sunshine to daylight by
making the happy happier ; to teach the young, and the gracious
of every age, to see, to think, to feel, and, therefore, to become
more actively and securely virtuous.'—*Wordsworth to Lady
Baumont*.

² 'But, by the storms of circumstance unshaken,
And subject neither to eclipse nor wane,
Duty exists ;—immutably survive,
For our support, the measures and the forms,
Which an abstract intelligence supplies,
Whose Kingdom is, where time and space are not.'

Wordsworth's ablest critics—for they stand for right action and right thinking, and truth and virtue are inseparable.

‘Of this faith
Never forsaken, that by acting well,
And understanding, I should learn to love
The end of life, and everything we know.’

But we must not rest in the idea of duty as an external power or as the ultimate and highest motive. As long as self-sacrifice is self-sacrifice and not self-realization, it is but a makeshift.

‘Denial and restraint I prize
No further than they breed a second Will more wise.’

Spontaneity and divine enjoyment are the goal. And it is only needful for us to see ourselves as we are, and to feel our true relations to the world and to each other, in order to realize more than revolutionary, nay, more than Utopian ideals.

‘Beauty—a living presence of the earth,
Surpassing the most fair ideal forms
Which craft of delicate spirits hath composed
From earth's materials—waits upon my steps ;
Pitches her tents before me as I move,
An hourly neighbour. Paradise, and groves
Elysian, fortunate fields—like those of old
Sought in the Atlantic Main—why should they be
A history only of departed things,
Or a mere fiction of what never was ?
For the discerning intellect of man,
When wedded to this goodly universe
In love and holy passion, shall find these
A simple product of the common day.

—I, long before the blissful hour arrives,
 Would chant, in lonely peace, the spousal verse
 Of this great consummation—and, by words
 Which speak of nothing more than what we are,
 Would I arouse the sensual from their sleep
 Of Death, and win the vacant and vain
 To noble raptures.'

But what of the rank and file of humanity?
 Is this vision of glory for them too? Have the
 lives lived in the rustic hovel or in the city slum
 only to be seen as they are in order to be beautiful?
 Passages too long to quote, in the Eighth and Ninth
 Books of the *Excursion*, show how deeply Words-
 worth was sensible of the sordid and dehumanizing
 conditions under which a great part of humanity
 now lives. And as for sorrow, he was under no
 illusions—

Such grateful haunts foregoing, if I oft
 Must turn elsewhere—to travel near the tribes
 And fellowships of men, and see ill sights
 Of madding passions mutually inflamed ;
 Must hear humanity in fields and groves
 Pipe solitary anguish ; or must hang
 Brooding above the fierce confederate storm
 Of sorrow, barricadoed evermore
 Within the walls of cities—may these sounds
 Have their authentic comment, that even these
 Hearing I be not downcast or forlorn.

What, then, is Wordsworth's 'authentic comment'?
 Why are we not to be 'downcast or forlorn'? This
 brings us back once more to our starting-point in
 the French Revolution. All revolutionary move-
 ments are directed against the institutions of society,

and all of them are apt to confuse the effect of those institutions with the effect of more permanent and less modifiable conditions of human life, or factors of human nature. The collapse of his hopes based on the French Revolution brought Wordsworth to the conviction that no institutional changes could have supreme transforming power upon the state of man on earth; therefore the question of questions must be: What are the possibilities of those permanent inevitable relations which exist between man and man and between man and nature? There is much in the lot of man which may be and ought to be changed, but to the end of the chapter man must support his life by intercourse with nature, animate and inanimate, and must stand in the elementary relations of husband and wife, parent and child, brother, lover, friend, fellow-countryman, to his kind. All else is superstructure and may be varied. This is essential and permanent. The possibilities of mankind as a whole are conditioned by the possibilities of these relations. Hence the profound significance, not sufficiently understood even yet, of Wordsworth's studies of peasant life.

‘Inspect the basis of the social pile :
Inquire,’ said I, ‘how much of mental power
And genuine virtue they possess who live
By bodily toil, labour exceeding far
Their due proportion, under all the weight
Of that injustice which upon ourselves
Ourselves entail.’

Hence the fascination of the life of the people for him, hence his attempt to read the thoughts and experiences of the vast masses who do not talk.

Shy, and unpractised in the strife of phrase ;
Meek men, whose very souls perhaps would sink
Beneath them, summoned to such intercourse :
Theirs is the language of the heavens, the power,
The thought, the image, and the silent joy :
Words are but under-agents in their souls ;
When they are grasping with their greatest strength,
They do not breathe among them.

Hence his desire to look into the eyes of the tramp or wayfarer, where he saw into the depths of human souls—

Souls that appear to have no depth at all
To careless eyes.

And here again his ultimate test is not philosophy or reflection, but experience. And his ultimate answer is not, as has often been perversely represented, that every peasant is a poet and a philosopher ; but that the essential elements of a worthy life are not precluded by the essential conditions of living upon the earth. Hence the belief that, although the social harmony has not yet been found, there is no pre-ordained and essential discord between the universal conditions of life and its highest ideal possibilities.

I have said that it is a perverse misrepresentation to say that Wordsworth regards every peasant as a poet and a philosopher. Yet it is an essential part of his conception of things to regard the ex-

periences of the ordinary man as containing in them, so to speak, poetic and philosophic *stuff* in an undeveloped and unconscious state. The rapture of communion with nature expressed in the *Excursion*, the *Prelude*, *Tintern Abbey*, and a hundred other poems, is the highest form of the elemental emotions experienced by the peasant in his dealings with nature. These dealings, it is true, rest on a material, not an emotional basis ; but the intercourse once established has in itself a refining emotional value which unites the peasant to the poet¹ :—

And this whole vale,
Home of untutored shepherds as it is,
Swarms with sensation, as with gleams of sunshine,
Shadows or breezes, scents or sounds. Nor deem
These feelings, though subservient more than ours
To every day's demand for daily bread,
And borrowing more their spirit and their shape
From self-respecting interests ; deem them not
Unworthy therefore, and unhallowed—no,
They lift the animal being, do themselves
By nature's kind and ever-present aid

¹ No doubt if you in terms direct had asked
Whether he loved the mountains, true it is
That with blunt repetition of your words
He might have stared at you, and said that they
Were frightful to behold ; but had you then
Discoursed with him
Of his own business, and the goings on
Of earth and sky, then truly had you seen
That in his thoughts there were obscurities,
Wonder and admiration, things that wrought
Not less than a religion in his heart.

Refine the selfishness from which they spring,
 Redeem by love the individual sense
 Of anxiousness, with which they are combined,
 And thus it is that fitly they become
 Associates in the joy of purest minds :
 They blend therewith congenially.

Indeed, even when love of the soil and of the things that live on it approximates to the hard or avaricious type, as may be said of the emotions displayed in *Michael* and in the *Last of the Flock*, yet to Wordsworth they are never wholly without dignity and even elevation so long as they are based on primary instincts and cement primary relations.

Thus Wordsworth occupies a position of his own with regard to the relations of the privileged few and the unprivileged many. Some have avowed the doctrine (and more have lived by it) that the many exist only for the sake of the few ; that the life of the multitude is not itself worth having, but that it makes it worth the while of the few to live. Others have found the only happiness in the absence of thought, and have idealized the life of the rustic or the mechanic.¹ According to this idea, to think is to

¹ Wordsworth himself has put their creed into the mouth of one of his characters in the *Excursion*.

‘ Praise to the sturdy plough,
 And patient spade ; praise to the simple crook,
 And ponderous loom—resounding while it holds
 Body and mind in one captivity ;
 And let the light mechanic tool be hailed
 With honour ; which, encasing by the power
 Of long companionship, the artist’s hand,
 Cuts off that hand, with all its world of nerves,

be disillusionized, consciousness is misery. Wordsworth's position is that leisure and immunity from the common lot of toil, though it would be a curse to many, is to be valued by chosen spirits, not because it enables them to escape, but because it enables them to intensify, the common human experiences. And hence the significance in Wordsworth's scheme of things, of such a life as he himself lived, especially in the earlier and more fruitful days of his poetic activity. Its significance lay in the choice he himself made amongst the alternatives of life. He had no ascetic love of poverty, but being a free agent he deliberately chose the things he thought most worth having, and sacrificed the rest. Simplicity of life he doubtless valued for its own sake, because, like St. Francis, though with more sobriety, he felt that the multitude of things that a man possesses may drain away his vital forces and crush his life out of him. He sought for naked contact with the realities of life. So far as material possessions are a necessity of life or

From a too busy commerce with the heart !
—Inglorious implements of craft and toil,
Both ye that shape and build, and ye that force,
By slow solicitation, earth to yield
Her annual bounty, sparingly dealt forth
With wise reluctance ; you would I extol,
Not for gross good alone which ye produce,
But for the impertinent and ceaseless strife
Of proofs and reasons ye preclude—in those
Who to your dull society are born,
And with their humble birthright rest content,
—Would I had ne'er renounced it !'

an instrument of life, they are to be desired ; but when they constitute a claim upon our vital energies and shield us from vital experiences, they are an encumbrance and a curse. When all the world seems to be blindly and desperately striving for the means of life, it is difficult to exaggerate the social significance of the man who, even if he make no direct contribution to the solution of social problems and take no part in specifically philanthropic effort, shows by his life that he knows the things most worth living for, and lives for them.

It is hardly necessary to point out how profoundly these theories and practices of Wordsworth interpret the efforts, often groping and unconscious, of the best thought and feeling of our age. If Wordsworth's spirit penetrated society, I will not say that all social problems would be solved, but the blindness and the passion that are hostile to their solution would be annihilated.

It remains to deal with the place of Nationality in Wordsworth's scheme. I have already spoken of the birth, with a cry of pain, of his sense of the significance of nationality as one of the general conditions affecting the life of man. The whole drama of European history at the close of the eighteenth and the beginning of the nineteenth century served to impress this upon him ; and though there were long periods of his life in which he professed the profoundest indifference to politics and declared that he never looked at a newspaper, yet anything that affected the national life or touched the sacred prin-

ciple of nationality always woke the profoundest emotion in him, and sometimes made it impossible to him for months or almost years to think or write on other themes.¹ He had seen the nascent sense of French nationality beating back the dynastic forces of the whole of Europe; he had seen that national sense which at first he greeted with such enthusiasm, perverted into a devastating spirit of imperialism; he had seen the nationality of England stand out as a bulwark of freedom; he had seen the despised nationality of Spain breaking the sweep of French imperialism before which all the dynasties had gone down:—

The power of Armies is a visible thing,
Formal, and circumscribed in time and space;
But who the limits of that power shall trace
Which a brave People into light can bring
Or hide, at will,—for freedom combating
By just revenge inflamed? No foot may chase,
No eye can follow, to a fatal place
That power, that spirit, whether on the wing
Like the strong wind, or sleeping like the wind
Within its awful caves.—From year to year
Springs this indigenous produce far and near;
No craft this subtle element can bind,
Rising like water from the soil, to find
In every nook a lip that it may cheer.

¹ Much has been said of Wordsworth's apostasy from the revolutionary creed of his youth; but my own belief is that the more Wordsworth is studied, the more shall we believe that if there is a certain drying and hardening of this side as of other sides of his nature, there is no breach of continuity, no fundamental inconsistency, and certainly no approach to a dishonourable apostasy in the progress of his opinions.

He had marked the critical significance of the rise of the sense of German nationality ; he had wept over the apparent fall of the Swiss patriots, and had exulted in the magnificent heroism of the Tyrolese, and refused to believe in its futility :—

Sleep, Warriors, sleep ! among your hills repose !
 We know that ye, beneath the stern control
 Of awful prudence, keep the unvanquished soul ;
 And when, impatient of her guilt and woes,
 Europe breaks forth ; then, Shepherds ! shall ye rise
 For perfect triumph o'er your enemies.

The principle of nationality was to him amongst the most sacred things in life, and he who raised his hand against it was guilty of the unpardonable sin.¹ When England appeared to him as the oppressor of French nationality, she was to him the enemy of human kind, and his pride and joy in his country only returned when she became in his eyes the champion of oppressed nationalities. Her greatness, like the greatness of the individual, consisted

¹ 'Not by bread alone is the life of man sustained ; not by raiment alone is he warmed ;—but by the genial and vernal inmate of the breast, which at once pushes forth and cherishes ; by self-support and self-sufficing endeavours ; by anticipations, apprehensions, and active remembrances ; by elasticity under insult, and firm resistance to injury ; by joy, and by love ; by pride which his imagination gathers in from afar ; by patience, because life wants not promises ; by admiration ; by gratitude which—debasement him not when his fellow-being is its object—habitually expands itself, for his elevation in complacency towards his Creator.

'Now, to the existence of these blessings, national independence is indispensable ; and many of them it will itself produce and maintain.'—*The Convention of Cintra*.

in the simplicity and the directness of her ideals ; her danger, like the danger of the individual, lay in idolatry of wealth and glitter, and in the confusion of bigness with greatness.

Rapine, avarice, expense,
This is idolatry ; and these we adore :
Plain living and high thinking are no more.

Shall I, as heretofore, compare the ideal of Wordsworth with European aspirations and controlling motives at the close of the nineteenth century ? Shall I ask what are the national ideals at this moment of England, Germany, Russia, Austria, America, the national aspirations of Italy and Greece, the national traditions of Spain ? Shall I ask, what principles have guided the Great Powers in their dealings with Finland, Turkey, China, Crete, Cuba, the Philippines, the Transvaal, and the Orange State, now no longer 'Free' ? The mere enumeration of these questions is enough to show that no single and simple answer could be given to them ; but taken collectively, they must surely startle and appal us. This may not be the time or place in which to discuss the part our own country is playing in this drama, or the relation in which her action stands to Wordsworth's patriotic ideals ; though to my thinking, at the present juncture, there is no time or place in which a patriotic Englishman should conceal his opinions on these questions. But whatever our opinions and whatever our passions, surely not one of us can afford in this great crisis of

our national life to neglect the warnings and the exhortations contained in Wordsworth's poems 'Dedicated to the spirit of national independence and liberty.' I can hardly conceive of an Englishman who will not feel that the principles there set forth, and the passions there expressed, are true and noble, that they express the highest aspirations of his country and those that he would fain hope are deepest and most permanent. He who brings his patriotic love and hate, his patriotic confidence and apprehensions, the thought of the things for which as a patriot he lives, and for which as a patriot he is ready to die, to be tested in the furnace which glows in these poems, shall surely find it purified of its dross and wrought to a higher temper.

THE UNITARIAN MESSAGE AND MISSION.¹

BY THE REV. S. M. CROTHERS, D.D., CAMBRIDGE, U.S.A.

A DISTINGUISHED American Lecturer once said, that it did not hurt his feelings very much, when some one said, 'What a remarkably poor lecture!' but he was discouraged when, on going out of the room, people wondered why anybody lectured at all. He thought that was the way one felt with regard to churches. It was not so bad, when people said this or that church was very poor, or very narrow, or imperfect, as when they asked why there should be any church. If they were to have a consciousness of their mission as Unitarians, they must have a new sense of the value and meaning of the church. By the church, he meant all churches. In the churches, they must have a new sense of the meaning and necessity of religious organization. It seemed to him as if two of the greatest achievements of mankind in the way of organization were the State, with the establishment of justice and law, by which the ordinary business of

¹ This Address is taken from the report in the *Inquirer*, hence its form.—ED.

life might be managed ; and then the conception of the organization of the Spiritual Life. It seemed as though men had said, 'We have organized justice, commerce, and philanthropy. Now let us organize and promulgate kindness ; let us organize spirituality ; let us organize the soul.'

What was it that the Church meant and aspired to be ? Shortly before leaving America, he happened to read a paper which he occasionally took up, and which was the organ of the English Catholics—*The Tablet*—and there he saw an account of a speech which had been delivered by a priest on the establishment of a new Catholic Church in one of the great cities. As he read what the priest said to his people, he said : 'There is surely nothing there that I cannot assent to.' The priest had said that the people were lonely, and the Catholic Church had come to give them fellowship and friendliness ; they were ignorant, and they came to tell them the best they knew about life ; they came to help the poor, to help the needy ; they came to build up their life, to come to their hearts. And he said to himself, 'That is what I believe. This church is the very greatest thing man could have. I want to belong to the church.' Now, what was a church ? It was not a mere debating society, a philosophical club ; its value was measured by its actual relation to the interests of the people. With respect to the church, he was willing to confess that his first desire—and he thought he was justified in it—was to belong to the biggest church ; to the strongest church

there was ; to the most ancient church there was ; that is to say, to the biggest, strongest, and most ancient church which would admit him without telling a lie. 'The Spirit and the Church say come, and whosoever heareth let him come and drink of the water of life freely. And whoso will, let him come.' He stood at the door of the ancient church, and said : 'I will ; I want to live that kind of life ; I want to join in prayer ; I want to join in helpfulness to my fellow-men ; I want to comfort others with spiritual kindness.' He sympathized with one of the old women in an American novel, who gave as her rule of life : 'While you get, get plenty.' Well, while he was getting religion, he wanted to get plenty ; so he stood before the door of the Catholic Church and said, 'Give me your invitation, and I will do your work ; I will grasp your hand, and share your fellowship. May I come ? Have you room for me, standing as I am ?' The Church said, 'Come, give me thy heart—come !' And I said, 'Who may come ?' And it was replied, 'Whoever will may come ; but, of course, you must accept certain things. You must believe in the Holy Father the Pope ; the infallibility of many things ; you must accept our ritual ; you must believe in the miracles you can never test, and in a great many things of which all the witnesses are dead. Whosoever can do all that, may come.' I turned away and said, 'Your invitation is not for me. You shut your doors against me, when in all sincerity I come.'

He turned away, and went to the great historic Protestant Church, and found in that so much that he loved, so much that taught him in the spirit ; so many beautiful things ; such a companionship. He wanted to come to that. He knew the good works which were being done ; he knew what truth, manhood and womanhood, lay there. He said, 'I hear the invitation, might I come just as I am to share in that work and life ?' And they said to him, no longer arrogantly, but sadly, 'Come ; but you must repeat certain words which are set down. They may not be to your mind exactly true ; but your forefathers believed them to be true, why cannot you repeat them still ? You must take a certain attitude towards modern things, you must walk carefully in the faith. Faith is very brittle, and it must be carefully preserved. Come ! Come ! with us, repeat the words and come.' I asked : 'Can I come as I am, thinking as I do ?' He might enter, if he preferred to give up that which was more sacred than human fellowship or outward activity. And as he stood there, he saw the gates shut against him. He could not come as he was.

Now, was there not here, in this great modern world, room for a church which would give new energy to the old work for the good of men, and yet a church into which one might enter with absolute freedom that he might drink 'the water of life' ? To build such a church, to live for it, to work for it, to brighten it in every way, as though it was something which demanded all their energy and all

their ambition,—this was what appealed to them. Not to believe this or that doctrine ; but to get a church which should be a church for the modern worker. Did they know that the great thing which had happened in this modern world of theirs had been a dawning upon men's minds of a new virtue—the virtue of veracity ? Men had long talked about truth, they had long gone after the truth ; there had been 'defenders' of what was called the truth ; but never till their own day had they seen man dedicate himself to truth-seeking—just as in some old temple priests were dedicated to a deity and to the sacrifice of a deity. This was what modern conscience had done : it had built up in the minds of men the virtue of veracity. One of the most searching addresses to the Church and the clergy which he knew, was that given in an essay by Professor Sidgwick, on 'Clerical Ethics,' and it asked whether it was possible—he asked as a man of science, without any predisposition to answer it one way or another—whether a man could be a clergyman, and have before him the same standard of veracity which was taken for granted in the man of science ? That was a pretty searching question, and he did not say they had attained to it yet. There still lingered prejudices and preconceptions which had to them the stale odours of the centuries gone by. But the Unitarian Church had not performed its mission, and had not done its work in the world, until it gave an opportunity to men of speaking freely their uttermost

minds, following truth to its ultimate consequences. 'Like a mighty army moves the Church of God,' and in the forefront of that army, though separated sometimes like the scout from the main body, but still belonging to it,—in the front of this great army must march those who in religion minister not merely to the needs of the weak, the lowly, the suffering, and the ignorant ; but minister also to the needs of bold, courageous, and truth-seeking men, such as were the pioneers of their faith.

The time was past when they must apologize, and think of their church as a refuge into which men could creep. It was not that. Their faith and religion were an opportunity for service that in the future would call—as never before—for their strongest, bravest efforts ; they would ask no favour of Church, or priesthood,—they asked 'only the wages of going on.'



Rev. STOPFORD A. BROOKE, M.A., LL.D., D.Litt.

THE KINGDOM OF GOD WITHIN.¹

BY THE REV. STOPFORD A. BROOKE, M.A., LL.D.

‘The Kingdom of God is within you.’—*Luke* xvii. 21.

N EARLY forty-five years have passed away since I was first permitted to speak in London of the Gospel of Jesus Christ ; and when I look back to 1857, and think of the progress made since then in Liberal Theology, I am full of astonishment at the swiftness of the progress, and of thankfulness to God that, in the swiftness, we who are met here to-night, and those who in the churches and other Nonconformist bodies than our own have fought in the same cause, have been so led by the great Guide, that neither by reaction nor by over-excitement into extremes, have we lost the deep-holding anchors of the Faith delivered to us by our Master Jesus.

Many new religions and philosophies, the com-

¹ The sermon preached in St. James's Hall, London, on Tuesday evening, May 28th, 1901, at the annual service of the British and Foreign Unitarian Association, and in connection with the meetings of the International Council of Unitarian and other Liberal Religious Thinkers and Workers.

mon property of which is the exclusion of the spiritual world in which a divine Father comes into the direct contact of love with man, his child, have been offered to our acceptance. We have taken what was good in them and true ; we have not abused or decried them ; but we have clung fast to that which they ignored or denied, and claimed for it supremacy. We have kept the Faith through a long and arduous battle. The little stream of Liberal Theology which had risen, almost unnoticed, about 1832, high on the mountain side, and had made its way over rocks and shallows, and among storms, with a joyous life in its increasing waters, had in the years between 1850 and 1870 reached the most rugged and difficult part of its descent. It had to make its way and keep its faith against the steady attacks of the Evangelical and High Church parties ; who, themselves opposed to one another, united against its progress. It had to accept the proved truths of science and historical criticism, and yet not surrender, as the devotees of science and criticism too often did, the root ideas of the Christian Faith. It was not unfaithful, at any point, to physical, intellectual, or moral truth. But it maintained, beyond all the conclusions of science, criticism, or ethics, that there was a spiritual world, in which God and man met together as Father and child, and whose truths were more vital to the welfare of humanity than anything else in the universe. Thus, while accepting the lower truths, it maintained the higher. This is the battle it fought, and the

stream, to which I have likened it, had for many years a broken, tormented, and contending life. Those days are all but passed away. Its waters have now emerged from the foot-hills, and we stand beside them in comparative peace. The turbulent stream has become a full-fed and quiet river, running swiftly, it is true, and now and then disturbed, but destined to greater peace, and widening into deeper channels day by day, fit before long to have the cities of a nobler religion than England has yet known built upon its banks ; and desiring to meet with a joyous welcome, in the ocean of God's love into which it will finally flow, its brother rivers from all lands.

Its former enemies come now to drink of its waters. Science and criticism have begun to feel the extremes into which they have driven their opposition to the spiritual, and are drawing near to a religion which does not deny what is proved to be true by them ; but which asserts truths beyond the sphere of their activity. They feel necessities of the soul which their special work does not touch or satisfy.

The orthodox have not only modified their opposition, they have yielded at many points. The Evangelical has become as liberal as the man he attacked with virulence in 1860. The High Churchman has published books on Inspiration which would have earned him from his brethren a summons before the Courts of Law forty years ago. What ancient history, what a dream, it must seem to the

orthodox Nonconformist and Churchman, when they think of the prosecution set on foot, after the 'Essays and Reviews,' against the assumed denial of Eternal Punishment! What a vast difference there is everywhere, save in a few fossil remnants of the past, between the moral idea of God's nature and his love, in 1860 and that held in the first year of this century! In that, more than in all else, Christianity has approached more nearly to the Gospel of Christ. Yes! religious men have all drawn together; but they have drawn together towards Liberal Theology, not away from it. We welcome the approach of our opponents, and long for a closer union with them in a simpler Faith. And for ourselves, that is, for all liberal theologians, in whatever Church or sect or nation we may be, whatever be our differences of opinion, we look forward to a closer union than we have yet attained. It shall be ours, if only we hold fast to the few spiritual truths which assume as their father-truth that God is, and that he loves all men and women with the love, omnipotent for their salvation, which he revealed and embodied in Jesus Christ. That is the binding, uniting power.

There are many who still limit this love, make it conditional on confession of doctrine or observance of ritual,—but we proclaim it without conditions. It is no less infinite and unconditioned than God himself. And, year by year, the churches and sects are coming swiftness—though the movement, through its vastness, seems slow to us—into that one doctrine,

that spaceless and timeless ocean, into which all religions will finally flow with joy, and find peace at last—peace from their foolish wars with one another, peace from their own fruitless restlessness : ‘ Until we all come into the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto the perfect man, to the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ.’

It is for that we wait and pray, in quiet faith and steadfastness, knowing whom we have believed, and that he will not fail his children. Meanwhile, at every point, we proclaim this truth : ‘ The life of God is illimitable Love, and the life of man is only found in union with God, in union with self-forgetful Love. Whatever is not of Love, is against God and against Man, and is a part of death.’ That is the master truth and law of the spiritual universe.

All beliefs in church or sect which explicitly or implicitly contradict that are doomed to perish. All religious ritual which, explicitly or implicitly, contradicts it shall also pass away. All the future doctrines and practices of a universal religion will logically and spiritually be contained in it. And all the daily life of man, in the golden time to which, in spite of a thousand failures, men still aspire, will be ruled only by that law.

Far, far away its brightness shines. Face to face with the sin and suffering of humanity, we are sometimes ready to disbelieve in Love. But the sin and suffering are the proof, and not the contradiction, of the law. That law is as universal, as

firm-seated as any natural law, and its sanctions are as sure.

If we violate the laws of the physical universe, we do wrong ; we suffer for it, and we make others suffer. These results do not contradict, but affirm the laws. And if we violate the Law of Love by living for ourselves rather than for others, we sin against the first principle of the spiritual universe ; we suffer for it, and, worst of all, we make others suffer ; and the sin and the suffering are the proof and not the contradiction of the Law of Love. There is nothing more inevitable than that man must himself suffer, and cause suffering to others, until he places his life on the side of the first Law of the spiritual universe ; that is, until he lives in the Love of God and man in daily forgetfulness. Moreover, until we learn and obey this Law, it is absolutely right that we should suffer, and make others suffer.

O learn the Law, and do its will ! Live outside yourself in Love. This is the foremost lesson of private life ; the foremost need of public life ; the ground of all union with God and with mankind ; the uprooting of evil, the rooting of good ; the source of all national and international progress ; the hope, the inspiration, and the goal of righteous human happiness. This is our main faith, and it was the faith of Christ. It is laid down by him in mystic words men never can forget : ' Whosoever saveth his life shall lose it, and whosoever loseth his life, the same shall find it.'

I.

The first stream of thought which flows from this main doctrine, is the intimate union of God through Love with the soul of every man. His connection with us is an individual connection, and is one of Love. Even though God is more than personal, He becomes personal to us. He is our nearest relation—our Father, as Christ declared. To believe this, and to live by it, and in its duties, is salvation, and, now or hereafter, we shall all come to that condition. We shall all be mastered by the Love of God. But as long as we disbelieve it, and refuse the duties which the Love of God imposes, we are sure to wander into wrong-doing, to become conscious of sin, to have no home beyond this world; above all, to be ever restless, disquieted, unsatisfied. For when we do not live in the Love of God and of man, we are sure to live in love of self, and that, being the antithesis of Love, makes us, in the lonely world of the soul, out of gear with God and man, with all the universe. At last, in utter¹²⁹ weariness and sickness, we arise to go to our Father, and then we know that he is ours, and we are his. The soul knows its Master, and in that knowledge knows itself. The kingdom of God is realized as in¹³⁰ us. It is the consciousness of a personal union between God and us, between the Father and the child,—the bond of which is self-forgetful Love, and the duties of which are the duties of Love. So we are not lost in the multitudinous host of spirits, a¹³¹ mere atom in the whirl! Distinct and clear being is ours; we are

separate for ever in the mind of God from all others—in the inner life isolated with God our Father.

This is the securing of everlasting individuality, that indelible desire of mankind, which all the humanitarian philosophies never can destroy, and which they so vainly call selfish. A personality, held in God alone, held in union with Eternal Love, cannot, by the very hypothesis, be selfish. It is personal union with Infinite Love, and all its outgoings must be loving.

Since that is true, it naturally secures our immortality. If a soul, bound up in this personal relation to God, were to cease to be conscious of itself and God, a part of God would perish. If there be a God, and if his relation to us be what Jesus declared it to be, immortality is no longer a perhaps,—it is a certainty. It is only at times, when we have slipped aside from Love, when we are glooming round our self, when we have forgotten to forget ourselves, that our faith in eternal life wavers or passes away. The moment we return into the atmosphere of Love; the moment we, with the vision of God in us, are borne beyond our self, our faith in that everlasting continuance returns, and with it joy and power. God in us, and we in God for ever—what a faith is that! What unwearied life is in it—what activity, what joy! And how, in its reality, the little trouble of our seventy years, which yet seems, when we do not love enough, so heavy—how it disappears! The pain and fret and fume of earth fade like an unsubstantial vision.

This, then, is the truth we have to teach—
‘Each soul is in God, and God is in each soul, for ever.’ It was the truth Christ taught. It is the root of Christianity. It was by proclaiming that, and dying for it, that Christ saved the world. By proclaiming it and dying for it, we, with him, save his brothers and our own. Men bow before its power as the summer wheat bows before the summer wind. To get men to believe it, is to release them from sin, to bring them into righteousness, to heal their sorrows, to quiet their restlessness, to give them victory over death. Tell it forth among all men, unconditionally, with no limits attached to it, as Christ told it; without argument, without analysis, soul speaking to soul in the name of God,—and you will sow the kingdom of God, like corn, upon the earth, and leave behind you an unhopèd-for harvest. For God gives a hundred-fold increase to the sowing of this truth. The message which the Father has given to us—shall we not proclaim it?

This is the Gospel we Christians are to deliver. But it is also the thing we are to feel, to know, and to live by, in our secret soul. There is a whole world within us—the world of personality, made within during years of silent life, of which no one knows but God, the life which is lived with him alone.

It is a sorrowful and restless life, when it is lived in opposition to him. We try to persuade ourselves that he has nothing to do with it; but in the hours when the soul is true, it knows by its rest-

lessness that God is with it, and that he makes it restless till it confesses him.

It is a happy and a quiet life, when the soul knows that it is at one with God, when it has yielded itself to union with its Father. Then we live in His love, and the love of pure goodness makes us grow in inward righteousness. Then, because we are leaving sin behind day by day, we know we are forgiven; that is, we know we are loved by God. Then, if temptation come, we conquer it; then, if sorrow and pain beset our hidden life, they are endured, for we know they are the source of strength and joy; then fear of death and that which is beyond death—the fear which is our deadliest curse—passes away from our lonely hours, and is succeeded by celestial joy; and with the joy is so great a sense of power, that all the force by which the world seeks to tempt or to subdue our character to its wicked will is counted as contemptible. Then, loving God, we love all that comes from God. All outward Nature flows into us, and fills us with beauty and delight. All human nature, even in its sorrows and wrong, is dear to us, for it also is held in God; and, then, beyond both Nature and Human Nature, we feel at one with the whole universe of Spirits, whom we know not, but who we believe are in the mightier worlds beyond our world, creatures who move and have their being in God; our brothers, with whom we may be, even now, invisibly concerned, and with whom we shall certainly act and live hereafter. These things fill the soul with infinite

delights and hopes and loves, till that little kingdom swells into harmony with the boundless universe. This is our individual life—the hidden, solitary result of God in the soul, and the soul in God.

II.

A selfish life? Yes, if that were all. But it is a life whose foundation is Love, and the first property of Love is to expend itself on all it touches. We are men, and we touch Humanity. The Love of God within us cannot rest a moment without expansion. It is impassioned to act and live for those we know now to be our brothers, since they are God's children. To help, to heal, to comfort, to exalt them; to seek and save those of them who are lost; to live for the great ideas and causes which advance and strengthen mankind; to lose our self-desires and self-thought in love of them: to forget the claims of personality in them—that is the outward result in life which follows directly and inevitably on our consciousness of being at one with God our Father in an inward personal relation of love. Love, conscious of itself in God, realizes instantly that it can only continue to live in God by expending itself in action among men who are his children.

There are uncounted proofs of the truth of that in the lives of Christian men. Christ himself is its first proof. No one was ever more alone with his Father than Jesus Christ. No one, more than he, felt his separate personality with God. In God, he

claimed and realized his individuality. This leaps to light in half the things he said and did. Yet, this very sense of separate life in love with God drove him forth into the world of man, to be there the greatest and most impassioned collectivist that ever lived. For the love the Father felt for him and he for the Father, came charged with the imperative message to save men, women, and children from sin and sorrow. That he declared in his first sermon ; that he lived throughout his ministry ; that he died for. And that is our life, our work among men. Personal to God, we are to be, as it were, impersonal to man. Finding our being in inner union with absolute Love, we are to lose our selfish life by giving it up for our fellow men. Wealth, luxury, money-getting, evil force and power, injurious fame, the world that passes away and the lust thereof,—all that does the slightest wrong to men, the falsehood and fraud which, at others' disadvantage, wins our advantage, whether these be personal or national—are to be counted vile, degrading, and ruinous in our eyes. They are sins against Love, and in them we lose our union with God and our communion with Man. O ! 'what doth it profit a man, if he gain the whole world and lose his soul ? What shall a man give in exchange for his soul ?' And his soul, his actual life, is in personal union with the Eternal Love, and in the incessant outpouring of the love he has gained from God into the lives of the children of God.

This is the life Christianity demands that we should

live towards all mankind, and it is the life which Jesus lived among us—the life which takes all the pain and wrong of humanity into itself, and gives all it has to heal the pain and redeem the wrong; which lives for all the great truths by which man advances, and dies to confirm them against their enemies. And there is nothing in high utilitarianism, or in modern philosophies of ethics and humanity, which is uncontained in this aspect of Christianity. It covers all our civic, social, national, and domestic duties. It covers all collectivism. The cry, ‘One for all, and all for one,’ comes straight out of the life of Christ.

Only, he did not leave that cry alone. Collectivism tends to ignore the natural passion for individuality which no theory will ever eradicate from man; nor does it, when it puts God and the soul aside, supply any means for the just nourishing of a noble individuality which cannot end in selfishness. But the doctrine of Christ does. It demands collectivism in all our relations to man. But it preserves our individuality in our secret relation to God, in the lonely union of the soul to its Father. And as that union is union with Absolute Love, it is impossible that selfishness should belong to it. The touch of self weakens it, the dominance of self, while it lasts, dissolves it. There is no other religion, save this of Christ, which satisfies man’s desire for a personality which shall not be selfish; and which, through the very ground of that personality—that is, through absolute love—sends him forth to lose

all selfishness in living and dying for his brothers in the Father.

Christianity is, then, all that humanitarian ethics demand, and more. As the result of the soul's personal union with God in Love is inward righteousness in thought and feeling, the daily conquest of sin, the daily growth in goodness, so the result of the soul's union with man in love is outward righteousness, the doing of justice and love in all the relations of life, the battling for truth, for pity, for honesty, for giving of comfort, help, and joy,—the keeping of all the moral law, as it is expanded in self-sacrifice. Christ himself contrasted his enlargement of ethics with the outward ethics of his time. The doing of right must come from the heart, must flow from love, must be done inwardly in feeling before outwardly in practice; and all the modern enlargements of ethics have not gone beyond his enlargement. To follow his method—from within to without, from life to form—to secure righteousness and love within, and, therefore, inevitably righteousness and love without—is to grasp the whole of morality.

III.

But though pure morality is a necessary part of religion, it is not enough to satisfy human nature. It leaves unsatisfied, unfed, that passion in us which seeks the infinite, which desires always to exceed attainment, which aspires to perfection. It

leaves the imagination cold ; it has no nourishment for those thoughts which wander through eternity ; it leaves love without means to excel its past, and to claim its illimitable heritage of action. It binds us down to this world alone. 'Here and only here lies our duty and our effort.'

It is the essential difference of Christianity that it speaks primarily to these spiritual and imaginative passions in man ; to the desire for the ideal, the perfect, the infinite ; to that in us which knits us closest to him who is infinite and perfect. It speaks to love, not to law ; to love which is never satisfied with what it does, not to law which is satisfied with its own obedience. It knows that love of absolute goodness always excels that which the law demands, that it fulfils the law in expressing itself. It holds, while it secures morality, that morality is insufficient for a high human religion. And Jesus knew that well. He began with the morality of John the Baptist, 'Repent, for the Kingdom of Heaven is at hand.' But he soon left that formula behind ; and it was succeeded by 'Be ye perfect, perfect in love, even as your Father in Heaven is perfect.' 'When ye have done all, say that ye are unprofitable servants—we have done only what it is our duty to do.' That is, he laid before us the infinite, the unattainable, the perfection of God himself, the illimitable effort of love to express itself for ever, as the goal of the human soul, as the refreshment of the ever-climbing imagination, as the eternal aspiration of

the spirit. This is that which separates Christianity from all other religions. It is not ethics, though it includes them. It is love of infinite goodness ; always acting, but making every act the stepping-stone to a higher act ; always fulfilling, but from every fulfilment seeing a new horizon. Only eternity can be its home, only in the boundlessness of love is its satisfaction. Oh, well did Jesus know the deep things of the human heart when he opened to it the regions beyond morality ; when he called on our love to expand for ever ; when he bade us pursue the infinity of righteousness ; when he disclosed to the imagination the absolute beauty ; when he said, 'Your Father is perfect, be satisfied with nothing less than his perfection.'

There is no finality in such a religion. It provides for endless development. Nearer and dearer, because of this ideality in it, it will become to the heart of man. We have had enough of materialisms of late, enough of the ethics which bind us only to this earth, to the visible, to a race which we are to serve while it perishes for ever ; to duties done without passion and reckoned up at the close of the day ! We have had enough of a world which has put aside imagination for analysis and claimed the logical understanding as the only master of life, which has denied the invisible and the eternal as objects of thought, exiled Faith from its home in the heart, and, while it asserted man, denied God. We had to

go through this, but it has been a pitiable business, and the results on society have not been enchanting. But now I seem to see that things are beginning to change. Love and imagination are again awakening. Men are tending to believe in and desire the invisible, the unattainable, the spiritual. They wish for conduct, but they long for perfection. They cannot live any longer without God the Father, nor do their work in the world without the love of Jesus Christ. Faith is re-admitted to the heart, half-shamefully indeed, but yet with an inward joy ; and this living part of Christianity on which I have dwelt—infinite Love, not finite Law, as the root of life ; endless pursuit, in thought and feeling, of the perfection of God, and imaginative joy in the pursuit ; union and communion with nothing less than the divinity of absolute love—this is again becoming more and more an impelling power and life in humanity.

It has a hard battle before it, for its enemies are strong and many ; but it is set in array. See that you do your best in that struggle. It will be the struggle of this century to replace the finite and dividing self-interests of society by the infinite and uniting ideals of Love to God and Man ; and, in all the practice of religion, to lift the dry barrenness of ethics into the warm fruitfulness of the Gospel of Love ; and the limiting selfishness of the practical into the illimitable aspirations of the spiritual imagination, filled with the Love of God.

These three things of which I have spoken

are the main elements of the Gospel of Christ, detached from the doctrines and observances woven round them afterwards by the pride of intellect and the desire of power. They are the fountains of that religion of the future in which the churches may merge their differences, which will return to Christ and Christ alone. And they are sufficient, by themselves, for the spirit of man, for his life and death and eternal progress after death ; enough, as in the ancient story, for the wise men from the East and the silly shepherds on the hills of Bethlehem—and for all classes between these extremes of knowledge and society. For their region is the soul. And the soul feels what it is to love God and be loved by him ; to love man as God loves him, and die for his cause as Christ died ; and, when it loves, to see no end to love, or the life that love first creates and then secures.

IV.

It remains for me, in closing this sermon, to speak of the Teacher of these truths, of Jesus Christ. A Christianity without him seems the aspiration of some. A Theism without him, yet inevitably infiltrated by him, seems the aspiration of others. These are positions which even those who profess no belief in God do not take up ; for while they deny God, they confess the mastery of Jesus. For my part, a Christianity which ignores or depreciates its founder, or a religion which excludes or decries that

Master Spirit, is running to its decay and death. The heart of man will not endure the forgetfulness of Jesus. The love of the founder is needful for the religion which he founded. It is its driving power ; and all the more now, when the spiritual development of man is forcing us out of what the churches and sects have made of him to what he was himself, and to God as revealed by him. It is through Man that God has always revealed himself. All we know of God we know through man ; and it was fitting, if God loved us, that mankind, in the midst of imperfect revelations, should have at least one perfect disclosure of his character and of his love to us—one of us who could say with full conviction, 'The works I do, the words I speak, are the Father's works and words ; I and my Father are one ;' so that we, his brothers, should come, in his following, to speak the speech and do the deeds of God ; to say, at last, with him, we and the Father are one. This is the destiny of man, and it is Christ's most blessed revelation.

Well, he came to us. We saw the character and the will of God to us in a life so lived that it has earned the undying love of the world. Jesus was supreme, pure love, and never, while the heart of man remains, will it forget to answer that love with love. If the future religion of the world is rooted in the simple truths he taught concerning God and the soul of man, the propagation, the inspiration, the driving power of that doctrine is rooted in a personal love of Jesus Christ, such as

filled the heart of St. Paul. Only we must clear his image ; we must see him as he is.

There is no need to attack or to argue against the images made of him by the theologians who limit his gospel, or bind their creeds like chains around him. Leave them alone. Touch them not. Why trouble about them ? Our best refutation of them is to disclose him as he really is, to listen to his voice in Palestine, to stand beside his cross, to talk to him as man to man. Then our heart will burn within us and we shall know his power. We shall love him as our Master, love his message, and the Father to whom he leads us, and the human race for which he lived and died and rose again. This is the Love which will give movement and passion and fire to the universal Church. We are men, women, and children, not angels or strong spirits ; and we need, to impassionate us, love for a human leader, as well as love for the Divine Spirit he disclosed to us so fully. And God our Father knew this well, and sent us Christ to love. Centuries of theology, working not in the spiritual but in the intellectual sphere, have thrown veil after veil of mist over his words, his work, his life, over the real personality of the man who walked in the fields of Galilee and taught in the temple of Jerusalem. It will be our best and noblest work in this century, it may even be the creation of a universal religion, to lift the veils, and to ask the world to see him as he is, and love and follow what we see.

These, then, are the great, the eternal truths.

What more do you want for life and death and the world to come ?

(1.) God in us through love of us ; we in God through love of him ; the character of God interwoven for ever with our character ; our personal life eternal in him. That is our inward being.

(2.) That inner love streaming forth in love to our brothers who are children of the love of God, for whom we are bound to forget ourselves, for whom we are called to live and die, who are at one with us for ever in God ; whose service is God's service. This is our outward being.

(3.) And for our deepest life, the pursuit of perfection, of the unreached ideal of the infinite love, beauty, and truth of God ; the uplifting of all morality into love that never knows content ; the heightening of laborious perseverance into the easy creativeness of passionate activity ; the opening out from the world of the senses and the understanding, of the illimitable regions where God unveils, in joyous eternities, the inexhaustible riches of his Being to the spiritual imagination ; the cry which rings like a silver trumpet in the heart—' Be ye perfect as your Father in Heaven is perfect.' This is the being that we shall be.

(4.) And lastly, with these truths, the deep impassioned, human love of their doer and revealer. This is the high, serene hill-top of the religion of Christ, full of green pastures where the Good Shepherd feeds his sheep, in the sunshine and fresh air of God. Below, in the misty

plains, men who might be there and who, in the life of the soul, visit this blest region of peace, are fighting phantom wars about the questions with which the analysing understanding has overladen religion—of creeds and ritual and church government, of the sacraments, of the limits of inspiration or of salvation, of the nature of an atonement, of the unity or trinity in God, of the nature of Christ. What are all these questions to us, if we live in the Spirit? They are such stuff as dreams are made of. ‘Come out of them, my People,’ saith your God. ‘Live with me in the simplicity of Light and Love. Turn to my Son, in whom I lived for you, and say: “Lord, to whom shall we go? Thou hast the words of Eternal Life.”’

THE REPORT OF THE GENERAL SECRETARY.

BY THE REV. CHARLES W. WENDTE, BOSTON, U.S.A.

REPRESENTATIVES of many nationalities and churches, we are met here in friendly conference at the invitation of the International Council of Unitarian and other Liberal Religious Thinkers and Workers.

This Council was organized on May 25th, 1900, at Boston, in the United States, by Foreign Delegates and others in attendance at the seventy-fifth anniversary of the founding of the American Unitarian Association.

The mutual interchange of liberal ideas and friendly sentiments among the free-thinking men and women, of diverse nationalities and religious antecedents, who had been thus brought together, created among them a general desire for more frequent reunions of like nature, and a continuance of the fraternal and inspiring relations so auspiciously begun. It was agreed that a permanent organization should be effected to bring into closer union, for exchange of ideas, mutual service, and the promotion of their common aims, the scattered liberal congrega-

tions, and isolated thinkers and workers for religious freedom, in many lands.

At a meeting held in Channing Hall, Boston, U.S.A., called by the Rev. Samuel A. Eliot, D.D., President of the American Unitarian Association, addresses favouring the formation of an International Association of Religious Liberals were made by Protap Chunder Mozoomdar, of India; Rev. Clay MacCauley, of Japan; Professor George Boros, of Hungary; Rev. W. Copeland Bowie, of England; Rev. James Hocart, of Belgium; Revs. George Batchelor, Charles W. Wendt , Merle C. Wright, of the United States, and others.

A committee, consisting of Messrs. Batchelor, Boros, Bowie, Eliot, Hocart, and Wendt , was appointed to prepare a plan of organization.

This committee reported the following day, May 25th, 1900, to the re-assembled delegates, their recommendations as follows:—

First.—That the proposed association be called ‘The International Council of Unitarian and other Liberal Religious Thinkers and Workers.’

Second.—That the object of this Council shall be to open communication with those who, in all lands, are striving to unite pure Religion and perfect Liberty, and to increase fellowship and co-operation among them.

Third.—That as this purpose demands neither a fixed constitution nor an elaborate official organization, the foregoing provisions be the only stated Articles of the Association, and that all questions

concerning the best methods to be employed in the conduct of the interests committed to the said Council be left to the future to determine, as experience, opportunity, correspondence and conference shall disclose the scope and possibilities of its work.

Fourth.—That the officers of the Council consist of a president and a general secretary, who, together with an executive committee, shall be chosen at each meeting to carry out its objects.

Finally, the Committee on organization recommended that the first general meeting of the Council be held in London, in May, 1901, and thereafter every two or three years, and so far as possible, in different countries in succession.

The Executive Committee later completed the organization of the Council by the choice of the Rev. J. Estlin Carpenter, M.A., of Oxford, as President, and the Rev. Charles W. Wendt , of Boston, U.S.A., as general secretary.

The British and Foreign Unitarian Association having extended a hospitable invitation to the Council to hold its meetings in London under their auspices, a London Committee was appointed, with the Rev. James Harwood, B.A., chairman, Miss E. M. Lawrence and Mr. Ion Pritchard, treasurers, and the Rev. W. Copeland Bowie, secretary.

It is simple justice to say that the labour of arranging for the present meeting, preparing its programme, and providing for the entertainment of its delegates, has fallen almost entirely on the London Committee. The Council owes it a debt of

gratitude which can only be repaid by a large and earnest participation in the meetings for which it has made such wise and generous provision.

At an early session of the American section of the executive committee, the general secretary was instructed to extend his correspondence with religious liberals throughout the world, and to invite their co-operation with the Council. In accordance with this instruction, letters were addressed by the secretary to a large number of individuals in various countries, who were known to be prominently identified with liberal religion.

These communications set forth the nature and aims of the Council, and solicited their interest in it. Later in the year, as the correspondence increased, a circular letter was prepared and sent to many additional addresses.

The response to our invitation has been general and cordial, and has more than equalled our expectations. Here and there a person addressed, from timidity or indifference perhaps, failed to acknowledge our communication, but for the most part the answers returned were full of sympathy with our purpose, and conveyed to us the assurance of personal goodwill and co-operation. Many of the letters received disclosed the loneliness and hardships borne by isolated liberal thinkers and congregations throughout the world, their heroic witness for Truth and Freedom, and their joy at the opportunity presented them by this Council to come into fraternal relations with their fellow-Liberals in Europe and America.

The following representatives of advanced religious opinion have indicated to us their sympathy with the movement, and many of them are here in person to take part in the proceedings of the Council :—

Rev. Alfred Altherr, Basle.

Rev. Tony André, Florence.

Rev. R. A. Armstrong, B.A., Liverpool.

Rev. George Batchelor, Boston, U.S.A.

Professor G. Bonet-Maury, D.D., Paris.

Professor G. Boros, D.D., Kolozsvar.

Mr. A. M. Bose, M.A., Calcutta.

Dr. J. C. Bose, Calcutta.

Rev. W. Copeland Bowie, London.

Signor F. Bracciforti, Milan.

Rev. Stopford A. Brooke, M.A., LL.D., London.

Sir John T. Brunner, Bart., M.P., London.

Rev. J. Estlin Carpenter, M.A., Oxford.

Professor B. Chatterjee, Allahabad.

Rev. C. G. Chavannes, Leiden.

Rev. Robert Collyer, New York.

Rev. S. M. Crothers, D.D., Cambridge, U.S.A.

Hon. Horace Davis, San Francisco, U.S.A.

Rev. H. Enfield Dowson, B.A., Manchester.

Sir Edwin Durning-Lawrence, Bart., M.P., London.

Professor B. D. Eerdmans, D.D., Leiden.

Rev. Samuel A. Eliot, D.D., *President of the American Unitarian Association, Boston, U.S.A.*

Rev. Joseph Ferencz, Kolozsvar, *Bishop of the Unitarian Churches of Hungary.*

Rev. F. C. Fleischer, Broek op Langendijk.

- Rev. Ernest Fontanés, Paris.
Rev. Edward Everett Hale, D.D., Boston, U.S.A.
Rev. Charles Hargrove, M.A., Leeds.
Rev. James Harwood, B.A., London.
Senator George F. Hoar, Worcester, Mass.
Rev. James Hocart, Brussels.
Professor H. Holtzmann, Strasburg.
Rev. P. H. Hugenholtz, Amsterdam,
Rev. L. P. Jacks, M.A., Birmingham.
Rev. W. Jellie, B.A., Auckland, New Zealand.
Rev. Matthias Jochumsson, Iceland.
Rev. Nicholas Jozan, Budapest.
Professor Nobuta Kishimoto, Tokio.
Rev. Kristofer Janson, Christiania.
Mr. Charles W. Jones, Liverpool.
Rev. R. H. Lambley, M.A., Melbourne.
Dr. George Lunge, Zurich.
Dr. Carl Manchot, Hamburg.
Pastor Harald Marthaler, Berne.
Mr. David Martineau, J.P., London.
Professor E. Montet, D.D., Geneva.
Protap Chunder Mozoomdar, Calcutta.
Rev. James de Normandie, D.D., Boston, U.S.A.
Mr. W. Blake Odgers, K.C., *President of the British
and Foreign Unitarian Association, London.*
Lady O'Hagan, Townley, Burnley.
Dr. Gustav Oppert, Berlin.
Professor F. G. Peabody, D.D., Harvard, U.S.A.
Professor Otto Pfleiderer, D.D., Berlin.
Miss Marian Pritchard, London.
Professor Jean Réville, D.D., Paris.

Mr. Theodor Rupp, Koenigsberg, Prussia.
Lady Agatha Russell, Richmond, Surrey.
Professor Jitzumen Saji, Tokio.
Mrs. Karen Sass, Jutland.
Rev. M. J. Savage, D.D., New York.
Rev. Dr. C. Schieler, Koenigsberg, Prussia.
Rev. T. R. Slicer, D.D., New York.
Rev. J. T. Sunderland, M.A., Toronto.
Rev. W. G. Tarrant, B.A., London.
Mr. V. Tchertkoff, Christchurch, Hants.
Professor C. P. Tiele, D.D., Leiden.
Rev. T. Van Ness, Boston, U.S.A.
Dr. Veeck, Editor *Das Protestanten-Blatt*, Bremen.
Mrs. Humphry Ward, London.
Mrs. Kate Gannett Wells, Boston, U.S.A.
Miss M. Westenholz, Copenhagen.
Rev. P. H. Wicksteed, M.A., London.
Rev. S. Fletcher Williams, London.
Hon. Carroll D. Wright, Washington, U.S.A.

With so large and widespread a response, it has become more and more apparent to us during the year, that the formation of this Council was timely and needed, and that we are inaugurating a movement of profound significance, and great promise of usefulness on behalf of Liberal Religion. The remarkable advance in civilization during the past century has brought the nations of the earth into closer and more complex relations, and made them conscious, as never before, of their interdependence and mutual obligations. The ultimate

'Federation of the World' for ideal and fraternal ends is no longer merely a poet's dream; it is an axiom of sound political ethics. The organization of international effort, which has already accomplished so much in the interests of industry and commerce, learned scholarship, scientific research, and political action, should, with even greater reason, be extended to the field of religion. It should be recognized more universally, that nativity and language and religious antecedents form no insurmountable barrier to an international union of hearts and hands for the religious enlightenment and emancipation of mankind.

Already this conviction has led to great International Assemblies of Orthodox Christian Believers in the interest of their particular church or sect. Thus, in 1867, the Pan-Anglican Synod of Protestant Episcopal Bishops met at Lambeth by invitation of the Archbishop of Canterbury, and has met thrice since.

In 1877 the Pan-Presbyterian Alliance held its first Session at Edinburgh. Forty-nine separate churches, twenty-five different countries, and 20,000 congregations were represented at this gathering, which has since been repeated at Philadelphia and Belfast.

A Pan-Methodist Conference was held in 1881 in London, at which 400 delegates represented twenty-eight branches of Methodism and 6,000,000 of communicants. In 1891 a second Œcumenical Methodist Conference was held in Washington,

which represented 20,000,000 of people worshipping in that communion.

Still more notable in its scope and influence was the Parliament of Religions at the World's Fair in Chicago in 1893, which lasted seventeen days, and was participated in by a large number of delegates—Protestants, Roman Catholic and Greek Catholics, as well as Non-Christians.

The same conviction and fraternal impulse have led to the organization of the International Council of Unitarian and other Liberal Religious Thinkers and Workers. It is believed that its sessions, held every two or three years in different countries, will attract public attention and lend influence to its united testimony for advanced religious and ethical ideas. It is believed furthermore, that it will strengthen the hearts and hands of lonely workers for religious truth and freedom in many lands, and that the religious bodies who may unite with it will feel themselves growing in power and influence by the consciousness of larger fraternal relations and a broader organic life. In this good hope we meet to-day, under these happy auspices, to inaugurate what we trust will become a permanent and influential movement for the union in all lands and among all peoples of pure religion and perfect liberty.

EXTRACTS FROM CORRESPONDENCE.

THE Rev. C. W. Wendté, the Secretary of the International Council, received a large number of letters from correspondents in many lands. Extracts from a few of these letters are given below.

Professor G. Boros, of the Unitarian College, Kolozsvár, Hungary, writes :—

‘Just now I am in correspondence with a Jewish liberal thinker, who, I am in hopes, will unite with us, and express the sympathy of the liberal Jews in this part of Europe. It is a pity that, while there are a great many religious liberal thinkers throughout this country, they are so cautious in giving expression publicly to their opinions because of the antagonism between the various religious denominations.’

The Rev. C. G. Chavannes, pastor of the French Walloon Church in Leiden, and vice-president of the Synod of the Reformed Church of Holland, writes :—

‘The contemplated meetings must be productive of much improvement. *Pure religion* is impossible without *perfect liberty*. The propagation of the one, aided by the other, has been the life-task of many in many countries ; but the time has now come to make this great work conspicuously international. I may not be able to do much towards this proposed inter-

national brotherhood of Free Christians ; but I greet with joy the initiative now taken, and consider it full of promise for the future.'

Professor H. Holtzmann, of the University of Strasburg, writes :—

'My best thanks for the communication of your appeal for the International Council. I need not tell you that I sympathize with your enterprise, and wish it good progress. I will with pleasure co-operate in making it known among my circle of friends and correlated minds here. More I cannot do, because of my age and infirmities.'

Dr. George Lunge, of Zurich, who for twenty-five years has been the Swiss Correspondent of the British and Foreign Unitarian Association, writes :—

'There is no body of Unitarians here in Switzerland. In fact, our *Landeskirche* is quite broad enough to embrace Unitarians, as you may see from the organ of the reform party, the *Protestantenblatt*. The chief editor of that weekly has, for instance, edited a translation of the most important of Theodore Parker's writings. Personally, I should most cheerfully take part in such a congress. You are at liberty to retain my name as a member of the Executive Committee, if you think it expedient ; and I shall certainly consider it an honour to render any slight service in that capacity.'

Dr. F. Nippold, of Jena, after giving some interesting information as to the Evangelical Union in Germany, writes :—

'Every international union in the Protestant

world is of importance in a time in which all Protestants without exception—orthodox as well as liberal—are threatened by the ever-increasing power of the Papacy in all countries. Our Evangelical Union in Germany has therefore included and comprehended in itself all schools of opinion. By its side the *Protestanten Verein* (Protestant Association)—representing the liberal wing of the German churches—continues its former activity. I, personally, would gladly attend your meeting, as I did that of the Church Congress at Bradford some years ago. Unfortunately, various considerations make it impossible.’

Dr. O. Veeck, of Bremen, editor of the *Protestantenblatt*, writes :—

‘We have always maintained friendly relations with the Unitarians through our journal. I have caused the newspaper articles about the International Council to be translated, and they will soon appear in the *Protestantenblatt*. I will also endeavour to create a sentiment for the Council among us. I shall also give an abstract in our paper of the most important matters contained in the Unitarian Year Book you send me. Liberalism is lifting up its head again in Germany, especially in the theological world. We of liberal faith must cultivate all connections, and form a strong phalanx against the reactionary element in all lands.’

The Rev. J. T. Sunderland, M.A., of Toronto, sends the following greeting from the Unitarian Churches of Canada :—

‘The six Unitarian churches of Canada take pleasure in sending to you greeting, and assurance of interest in your great London gathering. We had hoped to send a representative to meet with you, but on account of distance have not succeeded. Canada is nearly one-half Roman Catholic, and its Protestantism is of the most orthodox type. It is to be doubted whether there is any other English-speaking country in the world where every form of liberal religion is more under ban. But this does not discourage us or rob us of hope for the future. It only shows us how great is the need for our Unitarian gospel. Canadian Protestants are an intelligent and earnest people. It is only a question of time when they must open their eyes to the results of biblical scholarship and progressive religious thought. Our six Unitarian churches are reasonably prosperous. They are located in the largest cities—Montreal, Toronto, Ottawa, Hamilton, St. John’s, and Winnipeg. Two are new; that at Ottawa, the national capital, has just dedicated a fine new house of worship during the past year. We are much interested in the International Unitarian Council, and the effort which it is making to draw the Unitarians of the world into united association and co-operation. We believe that the organization of such a Council was a step in the right direction. Important results ought to follow from it. That your meetings in London may be successful, and that you may plan wisely and courageously for the future, is our wish and prayer.’

RECORD OF THE PROCEEDINGS IN LONDON.

WE are chiefly indebted to the columns of the *Inquirer* newspaper for the following brief reports of the proceedings at the various New Century meetings held in connection with the International Council of Unitarian and other Liberal religious thinkers and workers in London at the end of May, 1901.

The week of meetings to be briefly chronicled here began on Saturday, May 25th. It was a week of eight days,—high days of festival for many members of our churches and societies, and for those associated with the International Council.

The week began with sunshine, and although we heard of storms in the North, rain in London came only on Wednesday night, after the *Conversazione*, to be followed by another fine morning for the first day of the International Council meetings. Saturday was simply for arrivals, and pleasant greetings at Essex Hall. On that afternoon a goodly number of guests had already entered their names in the book which recorded the arrivals, including the Rev. C. W. Wendt , Secretary of the International Council.

A campaign of afternoon teas—most merciful of institutions—was agreeably opened, the thick of the fight coming later in the week, but always welcome.

The Excursions' Bureau, in Mr. Ion Pritchard's charge, was kept busily at work; and here it may be said once for all that this section of the week's festival was most successfully carried out. There were, of course, some disappointments; but we have reason to believe that the various excursions and visits to places of interest were greatly enjoyed by a large number of guests and by those who undertook the conduct of the parties, so much so that several were repeated, and more than one party was considerably enlarged from the numbers originally planned. This was especially the case with the Richmond excursion, which included visits to Ham House and Pembroke Lodge. It happened that Tuesday, the day chosen for this visit, was the anniversary of Earl Russell's death, and Lady Agatha Russell said that no small part of her pleasure in receiving her guests consisted in the thought of the pleasure it would have been to her father to receive such a party in his much-loved home in Richmond Park.

SUNDAY, MAY 26TH.

Saturday was only the prelude; on Whit-Sunday came the Services, which were the first actual gatherings of the New Century meetings.

At the morning service in Little Portland-street Chapel, the Rev. C. W. Wendté preached from the

text, 'With thee is the fountain of life, in thy light shall we see light'—a sermon on the 'Universality, Power, and Permanence of Religious Inspiration,' laying a fit foundation for the thoughts of the whole week. At Richmond, Dr. Crothers preached in the morning and the Rev. N. Jozan at night. Dr. Eerdmans preached at the Dutch Church in Austin Friars, while Dr. Montet and Mr. André visited the Swiss Church in Endell-street, where the minister is an old pupil of the former at Geneva. Mr. André is also a pupil of Dr. Montet's, and they two at the conclusion of the service administered the Communion to the congregation.

On Sunday afternoon was the annual gathering of the elder scholars and teachers of the London Sunday schools in Essex Hall. Fourteen schools were represented, and over 200 elder scholars, besides a large number of visitors, were present. The service was conducted by the Rev. John Page Hopps.

Then in the evening came the special service for Teachers and Church Workers, at Little Portland-street Chapel, when the Rev. A. N. Blatchford was the preacher. The renovated chapel looked specially bright in its new and cheerful decoration when lighted up at night, and the body was filled with a large and earnest congregation. The first part of the service was conducted by the Rev. H. S. Perris, minister of the chapel, and the spirit of the gathering was at once felt in the singing of the hymns. It is only workers, whose heart is in their work, who have gathered for sincere worship, seeking a fresh

consecration, who sing as they sang that night. Mr. Blatchford took for text the verse from *Numbers* xiii. 30,—‘And Caleb stilled the people before Moses, and said, Let us go up at once and possess it (the promised land), for we are well able to overcome.’ He drew a vivid picture of the two determined men amid the hesitating, nerveless people who shrank from the dangers they had to face and longed to be back in Egypt. To Caleb and Joshua the forward path of duty and sacrifice was the one that could and therefore must be tried. Through the courage and devotion of a true man, a great calm fell upon the panic-stricken crowd. Out of his dauntless spirit came the triumph of the people and the preservation of their faith. That was the ideal which the preacher held up before the workers and teachers to whom he spoke. He recalled the memory of many devoted predecessors, and from such a lesson gathered an impulse of hope and determination for the glorious work to which they were called, into the promised land of child-life into which they were to enter.

MONDAY, MAY 27TH.

Whit-Monday was chiefly devoted to its great holiday purpose, and a glorious day of summer warmth and light it was. From all parts of the country our people came up to their great gathering. For the evening meeting of the friends of Temperance at Essex Hall, the pleasure and encouragement of a record attendance was provided. The

meeting of this Association was divided into two parts, first coming the regular business, with a number of extremely interesting and helpful speeches, and at the end a resolution, of which notice had been given in the Committee's Report, and which as amended was passed by an overwhelming majority, declaring that in future the Association shall be known as 'The National Unitarian Temperance Association.'

TUESDAY, MAY 28TH.

The Sunday-school Breakfast on Tuesday morning was the revival of an ancient glory, which surpassed in brightness all the breakfasts of which we have any remembrance. True, the meeting was not at half-past seven, as on the occasion of the foundation of the institution ; but at nine o'clock the King's Hall, adjoining the Holborn Restaurant, which was the happy scene of the London Unitarian Bazaar, was filled with a company of about 400, who enjoyed the morning hour as only those who attend a Sunday-school breakfast can enjoy, and then the annual meeting of the Association followed, at which many more besides the breakfasters were present. The meeting was opened with the singing of Mr. Tarrant's 'Labourers' Hymn,' the Rev. H. Enfield Dowson, the President, being in the chair. An address on 'Retrospect' by the President, and two addresses on 'Outlook'—one by the Rev. C. J. Street, the other by Miss Marian Pritchard—were

full of instruction and inspiration. Interesting and helpful speeches were also delivered by the Revs. L. de Beaumont Klein, W. G. Tarrant, L. G. Wilson (Hopedale, U.S.A.), and J. J. Wright. The Report of the Committee was presented by the Hon. Sec., Mr. Ion Pritchard, and the Treasurer's Report by Mr. W. Blake Odgers, K.C.

Tuesday afternoon brought the annual meeting of the Central Postal Mission at Essex Hall, and the Excursions, including that to Richmond, of which we have already spoken. Later there was a meeting in connection with the scheme of the National Conference Committee for the Superannuation of Ministers, as to which a resolution, moved by Sir John Brunner, and supported by Mr. William Colfox, Mr. William Long, and others, was passed.

In the evening a well-attended Communion service was held in Little Portland-street Chapel, conducted by the Rev. Charles Hargrove, assisted by the Revs. Dr. Brooke Herford, W. Napier, R. J. Jones, H. S. Solly, T. P. Spedding, J. E. Stronge, and H. S. Perris. Dr. Herford gave out the last hymn and pronounced the Benediction.

This was followed at eight o'clock by the annual service of the British and Foreign Unitarian Association in St. James's Hall, which was filled with a congregation of at least 2,000 people. The singing of the hymns was glorious, first 'O worship the King,' then Watts's 'O God, our help in ages past,' of which a writer in the *Daily News* said that he had never heard it so well sung. Before the sermon

came Frothingham's one great hymn, 'Thou Lord of hosts, whose guiding hand,' and at the end, 'Pour, blessed Gospel, glorious news for man.' The large choir, gathered from all parts of the country, also beautifully rendered the anthem, 'Thine, O Lord, is the greatness,' Mr. John Harrison being the honorary organist. The service was conducted by the Rev. V. D. Davis, and the sermon, full of inspiration, was preached by the Rev. Stopford A. Brooke.

WEDNESDAY, MAY 29TH.

The annual business meeting of the British and Foreign Unitarian Association, which was preceded by a devotional service conducted by the Rev. E. W. Lummis, of Warrington, was held at Essex Hall, Sir John T. Brunner, Bart., M.P., in the chair. Mr. Oswald Nettlefold presented his report as Treasurer; the report of the Committee was submitted by the Secretary, the Rev. W. Copeland Bowie. Speeches were delivered by the President, Lady O'Hagan, Rev. J. C. Street (Shrewsbury), Mr. W. Long (Warrington), Mr. Grosvenor Talbot (Leeds), Mr. W. Blake Odgers, K.C. (London), Rev. J. Kennedy (Larne), Mr. James Graham (Glasgow), Mr. L. N. Williams (Aberdare), Rev. Charles Roper (Manchester), Rev. J. E. Manning (Sheffield), and Mr. Franklin Winsor (Nottingham).

Mid-day on Wednesday the representatives of District Associations, Societies, and Unions, together with the members of the British and Foreign Uni-

tarian Association Committee, were entertained by the President at luncheon at the Holborn Restaurant, after which there was an informal conference on methods of mission work.

In the evening the *Conversazione* took place at the Royal Institute of Painters in Water Colours, Piccadilly. There was a very large attendance, and, in spite of the great heat, a very enjoyable evening was spent.

THURSDAY, MAY 30TH.

Thursday morning brought us to the first session of the International Council. The large hall was crowded to the doors, and the flags of the nations were appropriately draped along the front of the gallery. The half-hour before the opening of the Council was spent in a devotional service, conducted by the Rev. F. K. Freeston. The President's Address, the Welcome to the Foreign Delegates by the Rev. James Harwood, and the Addresses by Dr. Crothers and Mr. Graham Wallas are printed in this volume; also the Addresses delivered in the afternoon by M. Ernest Fontanés, the Rev. James Hocart, the Rev. F. C. Fleischer, Mr. V. Tchertkoff, and the Rev. C. W. Wendté.

The same afternoon, a luncheon to Delegates of District and Local Sunday School Societies, under the presidency of the Rev. H. E. Dowson, took place at the Salisbury Hotel. The inaugural meeting of the National Conference Guilds' Union was held at

Little Portland Street Chapel. The London Unitarian Ministers held a Conference at Essex Hall, which the Rev. C. W. Wendté read a paper on 'Art in the Service of Religion.'

At eight o'clock a public meeting was held at the Westminster Town Hall, with an overflow meeting in the Council Chamber. Dr. W. Blake Odgers, K.C., presided at one gathering, Mr. Oswald Nettlefold at the other. The speeches by Dr. Drummond, Professor Réville, and Dr. Crothers are printed in this volume. A brief summary of the other speeches, for which we are indebted to the *Christian Life* newspaper, follows.

The Rev. Joseph Wood, speaking on 'The Opportunities of the Young in the New Century,' said that the world belonged to the young, but not to the young in years, rather to the young in heart. But for the young in years everything is possible. They have opportunities before them which old men have not. He was sorry for any young man who could stand on the threshold of the new century and not be filled with a longing for an explanation of life problems. Speaking of the things which in the new century God might bring to pass, he said, amidst cheers, that the abolition of war was one; and that he might teach the kingdoms of the earth that lust of gold and empire were not the things that exalted a nation, but integrity, simplicity, and humanity. As to the needs of the century, it wanted in its young people men of outstanding character, of moral qualities, steadfast as the stars in heaven. The world

wanted good men. It had plenty of clever men. It wanted men of conscience as strong as the granite rocks of Sinai. He powerfully drew attention to the lowering of the moral tone at the end of the century; and, commenting on the worship of wealth, said that it was not greatness: that the poor men had been the great men of the nineteenth century—Garibaldi, Abraham Lincoln, Michael Faraday. Also the new century required men of public spirit and men who had the courage of their convictions. There were people who were really Unitarians, but you would not get to know it until you got at them in private conversation. Dr. Everett was once asked what was the need of the Unitarian Church, and he replied, that Unitarians should have the courage of their convictions. The demand on the young is for a fearless love of truth. Let them fly their flag. If they were allied to an unpopular form of religion, then let them fly their flag still higher. The man who was ashamed to confess on the proper occasions what he is, has no place in our ranks. The spirit of the age was not in favour of moral earnestness. Nevertheless, that was what the new time demanded.

The Rev. C. W. Wendt , spoke on ‘The True Basis of Religious Unity.’ He graphically sketched the dissensions that had run through Christendom since the very days of the first Apostles, intensified even since the days of the Protestant Reformation. He said that Christian unity could only be brought about by love. Dogmas could chain

Christians together, but could never unite them. The great topics of religion were too vast to be cramped into a formulary. Even when we united in saying, 'I believe in God,' what a diversity there was, immediately we began to define what we meant by God. Nor was it possible to find union in a similar form of worship. The different characteristics of men excluded this as a possibility. But it was not the form of prayer that God cared for, it was the earnest heart. The basis of religious unity would be found not in our opinions about Christ, but in our likeness to him.

The Rev. W. Copeland Bowie spoke on the 'Religious Outlook of England To-day,' which, looked at from one side, he found gloomy. Indifference to religion pervaded every class, and sometimes there seemed a despair of again recovering faith in God, and the love of goodness and right. And yet there were strong grounds of encouragement and hope. The roots of religion were firmly planted in the soul of man. The fearless seeker after truth, the courageous advocate and defender of right, the devoted lover of all that is good and beautiful and pure, would prove the best friend of religion, and the most faithful disciple of Jesus in the days to come.

FRIDAY, MAY 31ST.

The Devotional Service was conducted by the Rev. L. P. Jacks, who spoke of the true inward-

ness of the liberal movement in religion. The President took the chair at ten o'clock. Papers were read by the Rev. R. A. Armstrong, Professor B. D. Eerdmans, Professor E. Montet, Professor Bonet-Maury, Professor Otto Pfleiderer (read by the President), and the Rev. P. H. Wicksteed. After luncheon, papers followed by the Rev. Tony André, Dr. C. Schieler, Professor G. Boros (read by the Rev. C. J. Street), and the Rev. C. W. Wendt : all these papers are printed in this volume. The Rev. N. Jozan read a delightful essay on 'Our Hungarian People and the Revelation of her Soul in Folk-lore and Poetry.'

On Friday afternoon, from four to six, the Right Hon. the Lord Mayor of London gave a Reception at the Mansion House, which was attended by the Foreign Delegates and about six hundred of those attending the National and International meetings. In the course of the afternoon, the Lord Mayor spoke a few words of very cordial welcome to his guests; after which the Rev. J. E. Carpenter, as President of the International Council, acknowledged the hospitality which had been extended to them. There were, he said, gathered in friendly council, in the body of which he was President, representatives of fifteen nationalities and of eighteen different religious communities, and during the last two days in their sessions there had been not one word of discord or of strife. They were happy to think that the greatest interest of the British Empire, whose centre was in that city, was peace. Such peace

they had enjoyed in their religious assembly, and had realized in international and fraternal intercourse. Such peace they trusted would ere long be the happy lot of all the nations of the earth. He offered the warmest thanks for the gracious hospitality offered to them that day.—Dr. Crothers, on behalf of those who came from other lands, added a few words of acknowledgment. The Lord Mayor in responding expressed his great interest in the particulars as to the International Council which he had just heard, and especially in their taking for watchword the name of ‘Peace.’ He also shared in their aspiration after goodwill and peace to all.

On Friday evening, the social pleasures of the week were delightfully crowned by a Reception given at the Grafton Galleries by Sir John and Lady Brunner, on their own behalf and that of Sir Edwin and Lady Durning-Lawrence. The Reception was very largely attended and greatly enjoyed, the beautiful rooms giving ample space, and the hospitality being unbounded.

SATURDAY, JUNE 1ST.

A business meeting of the International Council was held at Essex Hall. At this meeting the chair was taken by the President, the Rev. J. E. Carpenter, at ten o'clock, and the Rev. C. W. Wendté, as secretary, first read some letters of greeting to the Council, which had been received, and made a statement as to the widespread interest in its aims, shown by correspondents in many lands. In addi-

tion to the greetings personally delivered by delegates from the various countries represented, letters had been received from Bishop Ferencz, on behalf of the Unitarian Churches of Hungary, from the German *Protestantenverein*, the Dutch *Protestantenbond*, and a number of individual Liberal leaders, who were unable to be present. Mr. Carpenter read a letter from the President of the American Unitarian Association, with personal good wishes, and enclosing the following resolution, unanimously passed at their annual meeting held on May 21st :—

‘Resolved, that the affectionate greetings of the Association be sent to the International Council about to convene in London, with the hope that the deliberations of the Council will promote sympathy and union among liberal thinkers and workers of diverse inheritance, experience, religious fellowship, and national allegiance.’—SAMUEL A. ELIOT.

Then followed a resolution, proposed by the President, and seconded by the Rev. R. A. Armstrong, offering warmest thanks to the representatives from foreign countries, who, in many cases at great personal inconvenience and sacrifice of time, had come to attend the meetings of the Council, and had so greatly strengthened it by their inspiration and support. Both speakers dwelt upon the unique experience of the week for the members of our churches in this country in realizing how they had part in a great world-wide movement, and on the remarkable unity of spirit which had been manifested.

The resolution was acknowledged by Professor Bonet-Maury, who, on behalf of the Foreign Delegates, very warmly reciprocated the expressions of thankfulness, and said that at Chicago, at the Congress of Religions in 1893, the dream had come to him that such a Pentecostal vision might be renewed, and in those meetings he felt that it had been renewed. To them, as French Huguenots, a minority in France, it was, he said, a great encouragement to be able to feel their unity with so compact and strong a body as the Unitarians of England. He added an expression of their special indebtedness to the President and Mr. Harwood, as representing the Hospitality Committee, who had done so much to ensure the happiness of their visit.—Signor Bracciforti also added a few fervent words, expressing his faith in the future of Italy, and his gratitude for the kind and generous hospitality they had received.

A further resolution, moved by the President, and seconded by the Rev. P. H. Hugenholtz, expressed the gratitude of the Council for the large attendance of representatives of societies and churches throughout the country, who had contributed so greatly to the success of the meetings.—This was acknowledged by Mr. J. H. Brooks, of Wilmslow, who expressed his complete concurrence with what had been said as to the great helpfulness of the meetings, which it had been a great privilege to attend.

The Rev. W. Copeland Bowie then moved a resolution of acknowledgment and gratitude to

all who had helped so earnestly and enthusiastically to prepare for the meetings, and carry them through. He could not pretend that he had not worked himself, but often praise was concentrated on one person, and others were neglected. It was impossible to enumerate all who had rendered signal service. Seldom had meetings gone so well, and it was because the workers, with self-forgetfulness, had aimed at happiness for all. The best thanks to them, he was sure, would be the feeling that they had contributed something towards a movement, which would leave not only very pleasant memories, but was full of the truest and deepest inspiration for life and work.

The resolution was very cordially seconded by Professor Montet, of Geneva, and acknowledged by the Rev. J. Harwood, on behalf of the Hospitality Committee and the other workers. The week had been memorable, he said, not only for the addresses which had been given, but for the listening. The earnest spirit which had been manifested by the great gathering in St. James's Hall had continued throughout the week, and looking at the audiences he had been struck by the expression of happiness on the sea of faces, which was most unusual in such gatherings. They had thankfully felt during the week that they still had trusted leaders, and could look forward with hope, feeling that their great work would be carried forward to success.

The following Executive Committee was appointed :—Professor G. Boros, D.D. (Kolozsvar),

Rev. W. Copeland Bowie (London), Rev. J. Estlin Carpenter, M.A. (Oxford), Professor B. D. Eerdmans, D.D. (Leiden), Rev. Samuel A. Eliot, D.D. (Boston, U.S.A.), Professor E. Montet, D.D. (Geneva), Professor J. Réville, D.D. (Paris), and Rev. C. W. Wendté (Boston, U.S.A.). To this Committee, to which Mr. Wendté would act as Secretary, was entrusted the duty of arranging for the next meeting of the Council, and of appointing a President, who should belong to the country where the Council assembled. It was agreed that the next meeting should be held in September, 1903, and Holland and Switzerland were mentioned as the two most likely countries for the meeting.

The subject of an International Review, which it was hoped might be established through the help of the Hibbert Trustees, was considered, regretful reference being made to the cessation of the *New World*, and the following resolution, moved by the President and seconded by Professor Réville, was unanimously adopted :—

‘That this meeting learns with satisfaction that it is contemplated to establish an international periodical in aid of free theological science and the principles of the liberal churches, and believes that such an organ may be of great service in the cause of truth, of liberty, and of religion.’

The Secretary made an appeal to members to bear the interests of the Council in mind, in the interval between their meetings, and to use every means, and particularly the press, to advance

their cause. Professor Réville moved a vote of thanks to the President, which was seconded by Professor Eerdmans, supported by Miss Westenholz, and carried with acclamation. Mr. Carpenter's response brought the public proceedings to a close.

MONDAY, JUNE 3RD.

To-day the welcome hospitality of Manchester College was offered to the Foreign guests. The French professors had already gone down to Oxford for the Sunday; Professor Montet had unfortunately been obliged to leave for the continent, to attend the tercentenary celebrations at Montauban, on behalf of the University of Geneva; but most of the other guests, accompanied by the Revs. W. Copeland Bowie, V. D. Davis, James Harwood, and W. G. Tarrant, travelled to Oxford on Monday morning in a special carriage, and thus, under the pleasantest conditions, enjoyed the country of the Thames Valley, which they saw in its early summer glory, while the first approach to the University city was only less beautiful than the last glimpse which the returning visitors had of it in the lovely evening light. The party was met at Oxford by the President of the International Council, and visits were paid before lunch to Christ Church and Merton, and afterwards to Magdalen, Balliol, and other colleges. Later in the afternoon a reception was held in the library of Manchester College by the Principal and Mrs. Drummond, when among the guests who came to

meet our guests were the Master of Balliol, the Principal of Jesus, Canon Cheyne, Canon Driver, Professors Dicey, Earle, Percy Gardner, and Tylor, the Revs. A. J. Carlyle, Buchanan Gray, Vernon Bartlett, Messrs. F. C. Conybeare, and P. E. Matheson. A pleasant conclusion of a most delightful week.

We cannot better conclude this volume than by quoting the following observations from a leading article in the *Inquirer* of June 8th, 1901.

‘For ourselves, members of Free Churches in this country, it has been a great delight and stimulus to be together in such numbers, for worship and for counsel, and in the happiest spirit of brotherly fellowship. We have no remembrance of meetings more admirably arranged, more efficiently carried through, so completely filled with what was good and helpful and inspiring, and in which speakers kept so exactly to their allotted time. It was a triumph of good management or of some hidden virtue, which it is astonishing to look back upon, but which adds no little to the full satisfaction and the happy memories of the week.

‘What must have been very widely felt with regard to the meetings of the International Council was expressed by the President at the closing business meeting on Saturday morning, when he said :—
“We have had a week of unique and solemn joy, a week quite without parallel in my experience, in the way it has made us feel that we here in England are in touch with a larger movement of thought and of

religion, which in reality is pervading the great civilized nations of the world." We have never before felt in our little country churches, he added, that we belonged to a great current of thought and emotion, which was making itself felt in many lands, expressing itself in all kinds of movements; and it was a happy thing that the International Council was able to gather up those streams of thought, so that we can feel our unity all the world over.

'At the same meeting, the Rev. R. A. Armstrong also expressed his sense of the depth of the new emotion which the past week had brought, marking an event unique not only in their own experience, but in history. They were so often told, he said, that they were outside the great movements of thought and of religious life, but now they found themselves in touch with a world-movement of the highest elements of humanity; and this came to them with an emotion of the utmost joy and triumph. What was most remarkable was that without any pre-arrangement representatives of nearly all the civilized nations of the world had given expression to the same sentiments, almost in the same words, with a delightful monotony. They were thinking the same thoughts, worshipping the same God, feeling the pulse of the same humanity.

'Later in the same meeting, Mr. J. Howard Brooks, speaking as a layman, bore similar testimony to the inspiration and delight which he had found in the meetings, and recalled a saying of Baldwin Brown's, which he applied to the experience

of the past week : " We have toiled in the narrows too long, we must spread our sails and go out into the ocean." That, he said, they were now prepared to do, and must hope that with favouring breezes they would reach the shore for which they were bound.

'These are testimonies which might be many times multiplied, to the deep impression made by the meetings of the International Council, and we must record with great thankfulness that our visitors from other countries, both in public and in private, gave very warm expression not only to the pleasure which they had derived from these meetings and the cordial hospitality extended to them, but also to the help and encouragement they had derived from such close and brotherly fellowship with members of other churches, of like mind with their own. We are accustomed to think of our churches as often set in isolated places, at difficult posts of duty ; but it seems that our Liberal Protestant brethren, especially those whose work lies in Roman Catholic countries, feel their isolation as keenly, if not more keenly, than we do ; and we are happy to think that in this matter we can give as well as receive, for mutual encouragement, for the confirming of faith, the vindication of a true spiritual freedom throughout the world, and the deepening of our common life in the one Spirit.'

THE END.

11/12/61

